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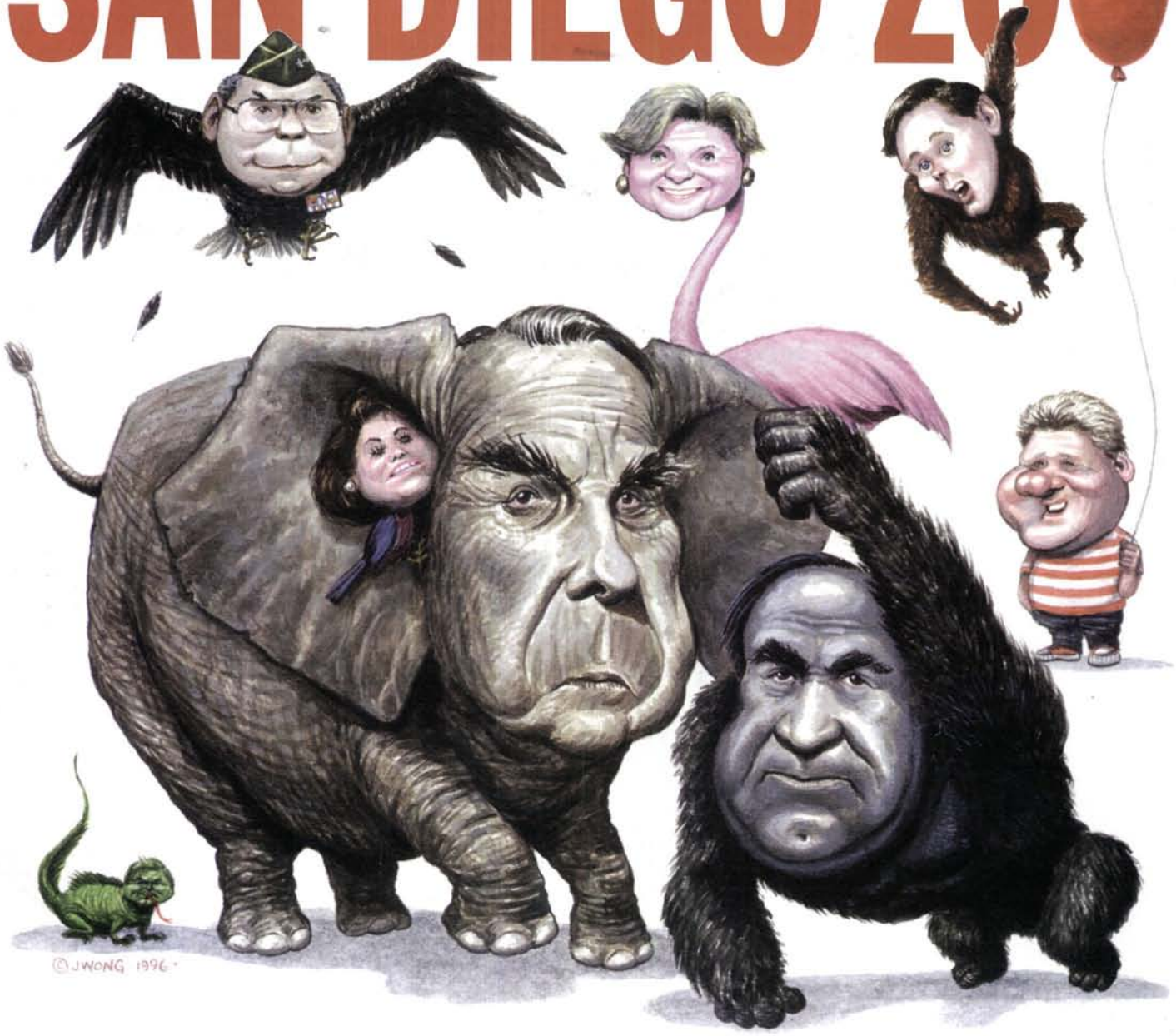

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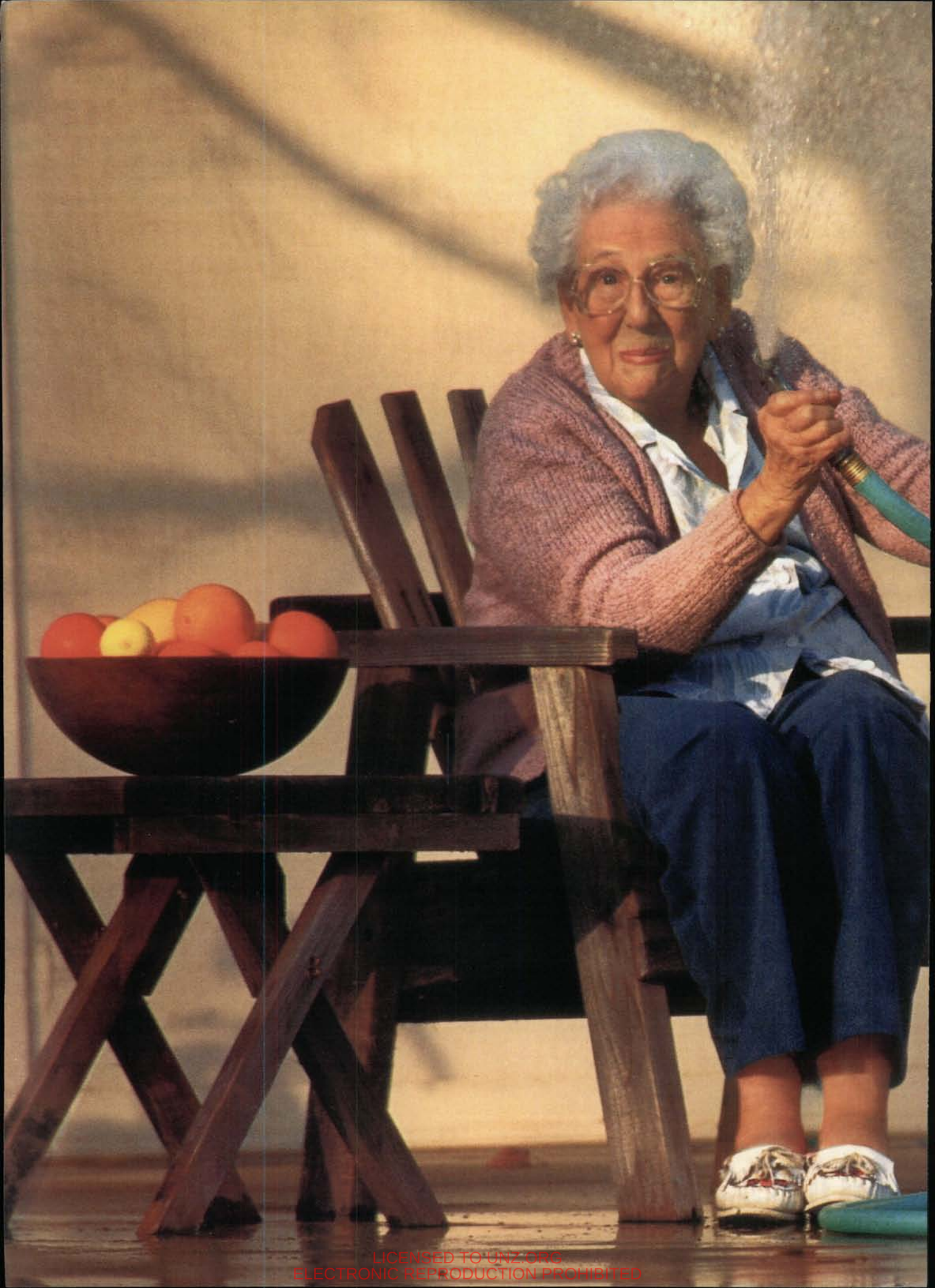

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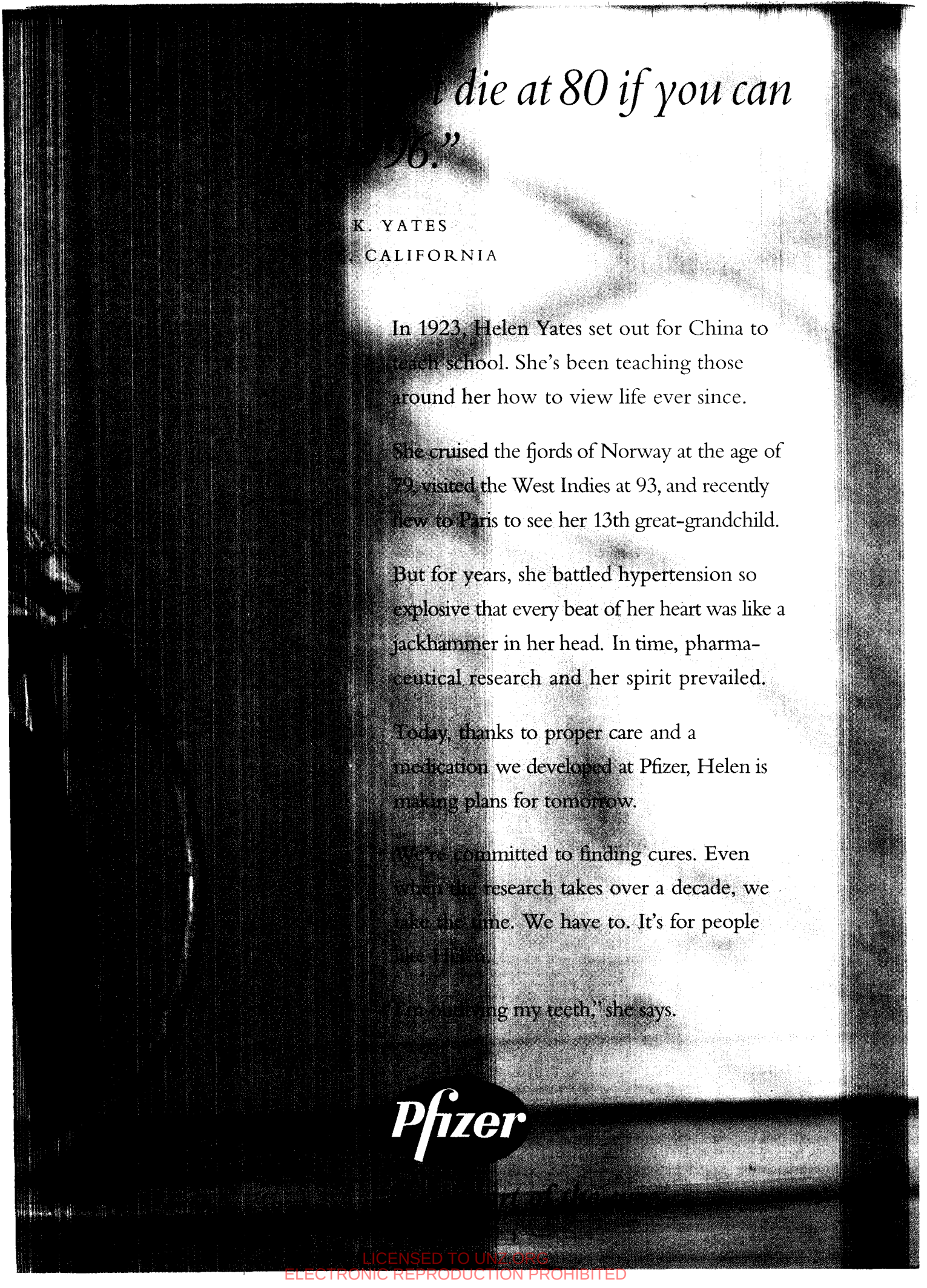

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FROM WASHINGTON

Liars' club

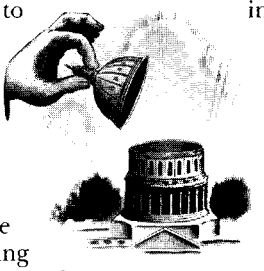
At first the international response to the July 25 coup in which a Tutsi military leader, Major Pierre Buyoya, ousted the Hutu president of Burundi, Sylvestre Ntibantunganya, was tough talk. From the most compromised quarters came the most uncompromising responses. U.N. Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali's spokeswoman declared that "the international community will on no account accept a change of government by force or other illegitimate means in Burundi." Kofi Annan, the U.N. Undersecretary General for Peacekeeping Operations, not only spoke of the need for a humanitarian intervention in Burundi but reportedly called for one that could "beat up on people if necessary" to try to stop the killing.

Those familiar with the way the U.N. actually works could legitimately infer that this time the great powers had given the U.N. Secretariat the go-ahead to act. In earlier weeks, as it had become clear that the Tutsi-dominated Burundian army was not going to agree to power sharing with the Hutu majority, admonitions and threats from Washington, as well as missions to Burundi on behalf of the U.S. government and the European Union, began to multiply. Madeleine Albright, the U.S. ambassador to the U.N., had warned that "under no circumstances would we tolerate a government installed by force or intimidation."

Such categorical assertions of what the international community would and would not tolerate should have set off alarm bells among anyone who has followed the way it has dealt with Somalia, Bosnia and Liberia. But in the context of the Great Lakes region of Africa in particular, all these fine sentiments and stern declarations are framed by one overriding fact: in April and May of 1994, those countries and institutions today issuing the declarations sat on their collective hands while nearly a million Rwandan Tutsis were murdered.

If this were not reason enough to treat this new hardline stand on Burundi with skepticism, there was also little cause beyond the wishful thinking that is endemic to so many initiatives undertaken for "humanitarian" reasons to believe these threats were backed up by more than the hope that the Tutsi leaders would be awed by them. In the same speech in which she asserted a coup in Burundi would not be tolerated, Albright admitted the U.S. had ruled out sending American troops there as part of a peacekeeping force. And Kofi Annan conceded—even as he warned the leadership in Bujumbura, the capital, that the U.N. might send a peacekeeping force over its objections—that few countries had yet agreed to commit troops.

In reality, it is unclear, given the U.N.'s current desperate financial circumstances, which are due in large measure to the continued U.S. refusal to pay it assessments, whether it has the money for such an operation. The Secretariat is solvent only because it is borrowing from the (separate) peacekeeping budget to fund its own operating expenses. And the predictable consequence of the resulting shortfall at the Department of Peacekeeping Operations is that troop-contributing nations will not be reimbursed, and are, therefore, less willing to send troops on expensive and open-ended peacekeeping missions like the one being planned for Burundi.



The fundamental question is one that U.N. officials seem unwilling to contemplate: What will such a force do if its deployment fails to produce the desired result in a fairly short period of time? A year after they acquiesced, without putting up even a token fight, to the fall of the U.N. safe area Srebrenica in Bosnia, and the massacre of its male inhabitants, U.N. officials are actually talking about establishing "safe areas" in Burundi.

U.N. officials have little to say about what they will do if things go wrong. "It's the same old story," a Pentagon official told me recently. "There is absolutely no plan about what to do if things go wrong except run away."

In any case, now that the international community's warnings have been ignored and the coup has taken place, the predictable rhetorical climb-down has begun. A senior Belgian diplomat, Eric Derycke, spoke for many when, three days after the coup, he opined that "Buyoya is the least of all evils" in Burundi. Buyoya, Western diplomats now suggest, may be a democratic figure in the Burundian context. The evidence for this is that although this is his second coup, he followed his first by handing over power after six years to Burundi's first democratically elected (and first Hutu) president, Melchior Ndadaye. But these facts can be parsed in several ways. Ndadaye was murdered by Tutsi militants 100 days later; that is, by Buyoya's brother officers, the same men who have again selected him as president.

It is possible, of course, that Burundi will turn out to be one rare example of the world acting decisively not out of interest but out of moral concern. Were, for example, Nelson Mandela's government to agree to a major force commitment, other nations in Africa might well follow, and the U.S. and the Western Europeans might then agree to underwrite the operation's costs.

And a massive, long-term intervention, followed by a prolonged international presence, both civilian and military, accompanied by serious diplomatic initiatives and sweetened with development aid, might well transform the situation in Burundi. But such an intervention would effectively turn Burundi into a U.N. protectorate or trusteeship. And there is simply no reason to believe, all the bellicose rhetoric of recent weeks notwithstanding, that the will exists, either in Africa or in the rest of the world, to do anything even remotely similar.

Instead, the world is responding, and will continue to respond, with half measures, pious sentiments: words, not deeds. In the name of sympathy with the Burundian people, U.N. officials and representatives of the great powers have chosen to lie to them. There is no question of a force being deployed that will really make a difference, because, for the foreseeable future, the political will does not exist in America or in Western Europe to act in accordance with our most generous moral and emotional aspirations.

But if the West, or, for that matter, the African countries or the U.N., are not going to act, or are incapable of doing so effectively, then surely it would be kinder not to pretend that help is on the way. Not only kinder, but more moral. Because to delude people about what help they can expect, as the citizens of Sarajevo learned to their cost—and from many of the same diplomats and politicians now pontificating about Burundi—can sometimes prove as great a danger to their survival as any threat they face from those they know to be their enemies. People who expect the cavalry to come rescue them tend to wait for its arrival. But in Burundi, as in so many other places where the fantasy of rescue persists, the cavalry is probably not coming, and certainly not staying. It is high time the U.S. and the other foreign actors in this story admitted as much.

DAVID RIEFF

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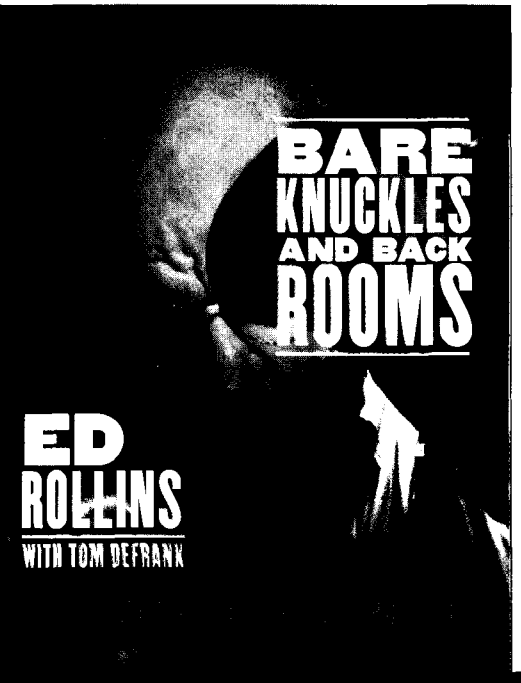

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A Weekly Journal of Opinion

AUGUST 19 & 26, 1996

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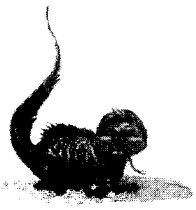

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CORRESPONDENCE

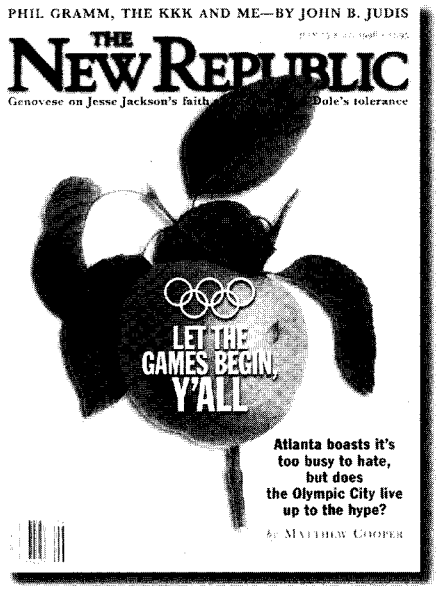
There may be four million Muslims in the United States, perhaps five, and they are entitled, not less than Christians and Jews, to participate as citizens and as believers in the institutions of civil society. Every gesture that makes this right real is to be welcomed. Like other communities of worship in this country, however, Muslims are not homogeneous. Like every other religion in America, then, Islam has its hyper-pious and literalists. Some simply tend to their own spiritual life, trusting in the Prophet and his Companions. Others are what Professor John Alden Williams calls revivalists, and still others are what Professor John Esposito terms radical activists. Standing at the end of a spectrum both political and spiritual, such people, in Williams's words, view "a holy struggle against the enemies of Islam [as] not just a collective obligation ... but essential individual religious obligation.... Here there is a changed attitude towards Christians and Jews.... The radical activists tend to say that, wherever they look, those groups stand on the side of evil. Therefore Islam can no longer treat them with tolerance. They are part of the conspiracy against it."

This conspiracy is alive in the collective mind of an organization called the Council on American Islamic Relations (CAIR). Calling itself a human rights group mobilized to defend Muslims against prejudice, CAIR has, according to experts, connections to Hamas and other fanatic associations in the Middle East. Its two boards are filled with zealots, including one person whom the prosecution identified as a potential unindicted co-conspirator in the World Trade Center bombing. Notwithstanding this reality, this past January, CAIR's director of communications, one Ibrahim Hooper, was selected to present Hillary Rodham Clinton with a Koran at a public event in the presidential mansion by a White House that either didn't know, or want to know, about CAIR's associations.

THE NEW REPUBLIC *had its own experience with CAIR after we published an article on the PLO's decision not to meet its Oslo accords obligation to annul the most virulent anti-Israel sections of its covenant. The article, by Yehoshua Porath, the first scholar in any language to do serious (and respectful) research on Palestinian nationalism, quoted Yasir Arafat as justifying his agreement with Israel with the excuse that Mohammed had also made a truce with enemies but then soon broke it. Within days of publication,* TNR *was the target of hundreds of abusive phone calls, letters and e-mail accusing us of defamation of the Prophet and worse. It turned out that CAIR had, through CAIR-NET, its Internet site, exhorted the faithful to tell us off, and they did.*

It should be noted that Hooper told his Internet followers to "be firm, but polite." And some of the missives were just that. With these writers we have no particular quarrel. But, sadly, many, many were not. Here, to give our readers a taste of the moral and intellectual universe of CAIR-NET's recruits, is a selection from their postings (with no grammatical editing or sanitizing). They're not perfectly representative but not atypical either:

"I'm calling for this man here, Jehova ... Jeosha Porath, Yehosua Porath, who's a man, or professor or whatever he is ... made a speech about Islam and condemned the Prophet of Islam. You guys had better watch out, OK? Because this is not going to go on further anymore, OK? You'd better watch out that fucking Jew ... tell him where he is coming from, OK? Because you know motherfucker bastard, mother—his mom is a bastard. OK? He can't talk about Muslim


PHIL GRAMM, THE KKK AND ME—BY JOHN B. JUDIS
THE NEW REPUBLIC
Genovese on Jesse Jackson's faith
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LET THE GAMES BEGIN, Y'ALL
Atlanta boasts it's too busy to hate, but does the Olympic City live up to the hype?
By MATTHEW COOPER

shit and you get your act together ... all of you. We don't want to hear anymore about this problem, OK? You got that right?"

—An anonymous phone call left on TNR *voicemail on July 20*

"It should be known that Muslims will not allow the defation of its religion or its beloved Prophet, such as is the Jews continuing effort against Islam in the media outlets, which has already been accomplished by them against Christianity. Again, it would be in your best interests to print an immediate retraction and apology for such shoddy and insensitive reporting. You should take this matter very seriously."

—Jafar Kareem
(Sumatra@gnn.com)

"The jews from back in history were the ugly decievers and BLOOD SUCKERS.... It is importatn that an apology is issued to calm down the MUSLIM all over the world. WE DO NO WANT TO SEE ANOTHER 19 AMERICANS GO A WSAY IN THA LAND OF THE PROPHET ,,, DO WE ??????? !!!!!! I am saying this because the Muslims will never tolerate the actions of the jews agains their religion. And articels like these contribute in the future loss of life of Anmericans all over the Islamic world.... We are fed up of filthy jews robbing our lands, and defaming all HOLY concepts we have. Please, save the lives of few Americans by issuing your apology."

—Mamdoh Ashir
(mashir@gulf.csc.UVic.CA)

"Do you write honestly? Or you really do not know about the facts? OR I MAY GUESS YOU ARE JEW, BECAUSE JEWS ATTEMPTS LIKE THIS. JEWS NEVER HESITATE TO SAY NIGHT WHEN THERE IS DAY BECAUSE OF WORLDLY BENEFITS (LOOK FOR RECENT INCIDENCE OF BOMBING ON UNO BASE)"

—M.Babar Imran
(imran@idac.tohoku.ac.jp)

"Only in America can someone lie and get away with murder! This anti-Semite (although a jew himself, I presume) is spreading false propaganda. Not only does this ignorant savage needs to retract his statement about Prophet Muhammad, but he owes Muslims first, throughout the universe a very big apology. Secondly, he needs to apologize to Historians all over the world for his uneducated and personal interpretation. In addition, your magazine needs to do the same for publishing and distributing such lies. Can one imagine someone disclaiming the Holocaust for example? This parasite's comments are far more serious than such a claim. Does this writer have the right to defend history in the instance of someone disclaiming the Holocaust? You bet! However, his false and unfounded accusation is the equivalent of defaming Jesus, Moses or Abraham. He is obviously a member of some Israeli terrorist group who do not want peace ... at any cost! We demand an immediate retraction and apology. Lies and false accusations belong somewhere else other than the U.S.A ... Please Note: This message [CAIR's statement, which the writer forwarded] has been distributed to approximately 300,000 Muslims, so far. Expect to be reading a lot of e-mail! :)"

—Basema@aol.com

"It is clear that the Jewish people have always hated and feared the Muslims. Throughout the years the Jews have done everything possible to destroy Islam, and cause separation among its peo-

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ple. However, they have only been able to prove their own inability to be trusted, and your statement is not excluded."

—Mustafa and Jackie Oyludag
Tulsa, Oklahoma

"The lying Jew states the following: [Excerpt from Porath article] ... I am not surprised, the Jews can not use reason to combat Islam so they have to forge lies. May he burn in hellfire for his lies."

—Al Shoreibah, Washington D.C.
(AL@aiha.com)

"I would urge you to formally apologize to Muslims and check your facts with a real historian, next time. Please! It is a matter of life and death."

—jquraishi@hearst.com

Talk is cheap

To the editors:

Matthew Cooper's perceptive "Welcome to the Olympic Village" (July 15 & 22) credits Atlanta's "late, lionized Mayor William B. Hartsfield [for helping] ease the city through the civil rights era."

As a former Atlantan (1948-62), I see in Hartsfield's example several practical lessons of politics and psychology. One night in 1959 prior to a trip to New York to meet with the Field Foundation then headed by Adlai Stevenson, the Mayor and I planned our appeal for support of certain race relations projects. At midnight the Mayor said, "Morris, this has been a heady session. I wonder whether I would be speaking this way had Negroes not got the right to vote in Atlanta elections." Then, without blinking an eye, Hartsfield added, "I don't know but I have been obliged to talk differently so much that I now believe."

It's not easy—and in some cases it may be impossible—to change the feelings in people's hearts about race or religion, for as the scholar Bernard Lewis once stated at a Conference of the Council of Europe, "There is an instinctive human dislike of differences." Nevertheless, actions can be controlled and even changed by leadership.

Hartsfield's leadership, and that of subsequent Mayor Ivan Allen Jr., and the clear endorsement of their example by Citizen-in-Chief Robert Woodruff of Coca-Cola made race baiting unacceptable in Atlanta's respectable circles. When political platforms, church pulpits and the media are hostile to overt prejudice and discrimination the general society will follow. And the ballot in the hands of minorities is a most powerful instrument of change.

MORRIS B. ABRAM
Geneva, Switzerland

POLITICS from ROUTLEDGE

HATREDS
Racialized and Sexualized Conflicts in the 21st Century
Zillah Eisenstein

Eisenstein charts the plural politics of the twenty-first century, which she defines as having begun with the fall of communism and the gulf war. Exploring the politics of hate on both global and local levels, she tracks developments such as racialized ethnic and gender conflict, the new male democracies of eastern Europe and the new Democrats of the Clinton era.

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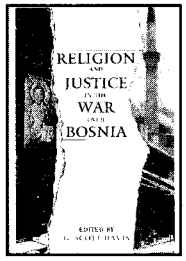

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Where We Stand

By Albert Shanker, President
American Federation of Teachers

The Push Against Tenure

There is currently a big attack on teacher tenure—particularly in the media. Look, for example, at the "20/20" segment that aired in February. If you took its presentation of tenure seriously, you'd conclude that tenure is an insult to common sense and its principal effect is to protect incompetent teachers by giving them lifetime jobs from which it is almost impossible to remove them. I'll take up this gross distortion in a moment.

First, though, "20/20" did not even get the facts right. During a parade of horrors, it said that a Michigan school was "unable to dismiss a teacher who threatened a third-grade student with a knife" and implied that the teacher got away without punishment. What really happened? According to the Michigan Department of Education (*Education Week,* Letters, June 19, 1996), the threat was an unfortunate joke, and the tenure commission decided not to fire the teacher because it weighed his error in judgment against a 22-year record of "effective" teaching. Instead, it suspended him for two years without pay. But the caricature of a teacher (protected by tenure) pulling a knife on a young child—and then getting off scot-free—is what will stick in the minds of "20/20" viewers. Unless, of course, they read *Education Week*'s even more sensational version of the story (April 17, 1996), in which the teacher "threatened children with knives."

But doesn't tenure protect incompetent teachers? No, it protects competent ones by giving them the right to due process. Tenure means that a teacher can't be let go just because he or she has said something that annoyed the principal or because a parent objects to a book on the reading list and is making it hot for the school board. And it means that a teacher can't be fired because a board member has a young friend or relative who needs a job.

Remember the story of Adele Jones? She's the Delaware math teacher who was fired for "incompetence" because the school board said she had flunked "too many" students. (The kids said she was a good teacher, and if they flunked it was because they hadn't done the work.) Ultimately, Adele Jones got her job back—because of tenure. Occasionally, there is an injustice and somebody who deserves to be fired keeps his job. That, as people realize in connection with our system of justice, is the price for having fair procedures.

As for hiring and retaining mediocre or incompetent teachers, the principals and the school boards are the main culprits here. The union acts as a kind of defense attorney when a tenured teacher is in trouble—that is its legal responsibility. However, the problems start much earlier. When working conditions or pay are poor, administrators may have to hire people they know are marginal. At the end of the probationary period, which is three years on average, a large majority of probationary teachers end up getting tenure, whether or not they deserve it. Sometimes administrators don't think they can find replacements who'll be any better; sometimes it's just that they hate to fire anybody. Administrators are also the ones who let incompetent teachers with tenure hang on without either trying to help them, or, if it is clear that they will never improve, easing them out or making the case for firing them.

If you took the "20/20" presentation of tenure seriously, you'd conclude that tenure is an insult to common sense.

Probably the biggest reason administrators don't get rid of poor teachers is that firing someone is an unpleasant thing to do. In the southern states where teachers are not protected by tenure, administrators could fire them much more freely, but there is no evidence that they do. And it doesn't happen much in businesses, either, which is why you find marginal employees who draw their paychecks year after year.

What about the objection that tenure means it takes too long and costs too much to get rid of a bad teacher? There is no question that procedures in many jurisdictions are cumbersome and expensive, but that is no reason to get rid of tenure. Other lines of work with adversarial proceedings avoid roadblocks by using procedures like expedited arbitration and making rules that prevent delay. There is no reason why we couldn't work out something similar for hearings involving teachers and school boards.

The policies and procedures governing tenure are not perfect or perfectly carried out, but the principle is sound. Perhaps most Americans understand that, despite the deluge of anti-tenure propaganda from the media. That's what is suggested by the results of an informal poll conducted by a New York State senator in his district. The senator didn't mention tenure. Instead, he asked constituents, "Should teachers who have successfully served a three-year probation be entitled to a due process hearing before being disciplined?" Seventy-six percent said *yes*. Instead of getting rid of tenure, which is what the one-sided accounts in the media are pushing, we need to reacquaint people with what the word *tenure* really means.

Mr. Shanker's comments appear in this ad under the auspices of the American Federation of Teachers. Reader correspondence is invited. Address your letters to Mr. Shanker at the AFT, 555 New Jersey Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20001. © 1996 by Albert Shanker.

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

AUGUST 19 & 26, 1996

FAIRER, FLATTER, WHATEVER

It's often said that if Bob Dole has stood for one idea throughout his career, it's deficit reduction. Sure, he's funneled billions in useless tax subsidies to corporate welfare poster child Archer Daniels Midland, giveaways that fed the bloated budgets of the Reagan-Bush years. Still, Dole has kept a healthy distance between himself and his party's supply-side loonies.

Until now. The loonies, undeterred by historical repudiation, have convinced the desperate Dole to embrace a massive supply-side cut, either by repealing Clinton's 1993 increase (which mainly affected the wealthiest 1 percent of taxpayers) or through an across-the-board reduction. Dole has started talking, oxymoronically, of a "fairer, flatter tax."

Dole's tax cut fever means that presidential politics this year could once again degenerate into a tax cut bidding war. In 1984 and '88, Ronald Reagan and George Bush pummeled their Democratic foes for refusing to rule out tax increases despite uncontrollable deficits. In 1992 Bill Clinton got wise and promised a middle-class tax cut. In office, of course, he got deficit reduction religion, dropped his pledge (which wouldn't have meant much anyway) and passed a budget that's begun to stem the last twelve years of red ink flow. As a percentage of GNP, our deficit is now the lowest in the industrialized world.

While Clinton hasn't disarmed unilaterally—he continues to endorse a host of tax goodies aimed at swing voters—he's acted relatively responsibly. Dole ought to declare a truce. Instead, he's about to up the tax cut ante by hundreds of billions of dollars and dare Clinton to match his irresponsibility. Unless he wants to end up like Walter Mondale and Michael Dukakis, this president probably will.

When speaking anonymously, members of Dole's coterie admit frankly that tax cutting is about closing Clinton's lead in the polls. On the record, they try to argue the case on its economic merits. Slow economic growth under Clinton (2.4 percent a year), they say, has caused average incomes to stagnate. Tax cuts will reverse this course. Consider this claim one part at a time. Although, as Republicans point out, growth under Clinton has trailed the post-World War II average, growth under nearly *every* presidential administration has trailed the post-war average. That's because the twenty-five years after 1945 saw sustained economic growth that hasn't been matched before or since. For the post-1973 era, Clinton's economic growth has been superb. Whether the economy can grow faster over a sustained period is debatable. But as long as Alan Greenspan heads the Federal Reserve (which will be at least until 2000, now that Clinton has named him to a third term), there's nothing Bob Dole could do about it. The inflation-wary Greenspan thinks the economy can grow at no more than about 2.5 percent. So even if a Dole tax cut fueled growth, the Fed would likely raise interest rates to check it.

Even if the Fed reversed its economic philosophy overnight and allowed faster growth, tax cuts are hardly the answer. As Clinton's GOP critics note, wages have remained stagnant the past four years. They were stagnant for the previous twenty years, too. This fact doesn't damn Clinton; it points to an underlying—and widening—inequality in the economy, as John Judis and Michael Walzer have recently noted in these pages. Profits as a share of national income are at peak levels, the stock market is booming, the college-educated are getting richer, yet the average worker remains where he was twenty years ago.

Dole's solution wouldn't fix this. It would make it worse. In the short term, it would widen the income gap. Since income taxes are progressive, cutting them helps the wealthy disproportionately. Supply-siders will say that regressive taxes are OK, since it's confiscatory tax rates that are keeping the productive (read: rich) elements of society from creating more wealth for everyone. But the evidence suggests they're wrong. Clinton's tax hike on the wealthy led to a stock market boom and millions of new jobs. Why? Because the bond market and the Fed responded to his serious deficit reduction plan by lowering interest rates, which in turn spurred investment. A budget-busting tax cut would shake this confidence, raising rates and braking the economy. The economic pie would not only be divided less equally, it would get smaller.

Dole's tax cut isn't an economic plan. It's a political plan. One interpretation is that Dole has betrayed his inner deficit hawk. Or perhaps he's just decided to treat the entire voting public as if it were Archer Daniels Midland. Some things have always been more important to Bob Dole than balancing the budget. •

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NOTEBOOK

BOMBS: It is one of the tactical advantages of terrorists that terror is emotionally exhausting. The moment of shock may last a day or a week or a political season, but it is essentially a moment, and in the interval between attacks American attention is gladly diverted to more tractable, less terrifying problems. It is a little disheartening to say again, after the World Trade Center and Oklahoma City and TWA 800 and Atlanta, that the United States is lacking a serious and sustained policy on terrorism, but it is, all those atrocities notwithstanding, still the case. Where to begin? With the reminder, perhaps, that terrorism is a form of war. Like a conventional war, a terrorist war has its soldiers, its weapons and its planners. The United States must act against all three. Against the soldiers it is difficult to act, since in many cases they do not make themselves known until they have already acted; but it is not beyond the intelligence-gathering capacities of the U.S. government to know more about the individuals and the groups that make up the networks from which the perpetrators often emerge. The Clinton administration has requested expanded wiretapping powers for the FBI, and it has come up against the customary chorus of civil libertarians who believe that the Fourth Amendment is all we know on earth and all we need to know. (Oh, and the First.) Against the weapons, it is not so difficult to act. One of the Soviet Union's legacies to the world has been the creation of a global arms bazaar unprecedented in its lethalness and its freedom from restriction. It was just dumb luck that those who blew up the World Trade Center were such amateurs. The gentlemen who blew up TWA 800 were more proficient in their field. But "proliferation" is one of those words before which officials and diplomats everywhere bend the knee and then do lunch. The Clinton administration's insistence upon "taggants," or chemical elements that make explosives easier to trace, seems like a perfectly uncontroversial idea to us, but it has run into the opposition of the NRA and its robots in the Republican Congress, who believe that the Second Amendment is all we know on earth and all we need to know. (They are opposed even to a feasibility study!) Against the planners, it is easiest to act; but in this regard the Clinton administration's record is most uneven. For acting against the planners is significantly a task for foreign policy. Whether or not TWA 800 was brought down by a bomb that was conceived in Libya, or Iran, or Iraq, or Sudan, or Syria, such terrorism is, for those states, one of the central instruments of policy. The administration has looked away from the magnitude of Syrian complicity and it has refused (this week again) to insist on international economic and political sanctions against the patrons of the terrorists. (In Paris this week, our allies preferred "constructive engagement," and we amiably agreed to suffice with close cooperation in "improved bomb detection methods" and the like.) The brazenness of terrorism is not exactly surprising: the United States has yet to retaliate, with sanctions *and* with force, against the Libyan murderers who blew up Pan Am 103, whose identity (like the identity of their protector in Tripoli) is known. These are the wages of Lockerbie.

CRIME? WHAT CRIME? In *The New York Times* the day after the bomb exploded in Atlanta, sportswriter Dave Anderson observed that whereas the "terrorists in Munich [in 1972] had specific targets: political and ethnic enemies," the bomber in Centennial Park "was meant to terrorize the innocent." This puts us in mind of the French prime minister who, in 1980, in the wake of the bombing of a Jewish restaurant in Paris, remarked that its victims were "Jews going to synagogue and ... innocent Frenchmen." And a few days later, on the "Today" show, Katie Couric asked Andrew Young, co-chair of the Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games, whether "people will remember these Olympic Games primarily for what happened at 1:18 a.m. Saturday morning," and Young replied: "[T]hese games are going to be remembered for the [Kerri] Strugs and the Carl Lewises and the Michael Johnsons and the—well, I don't remember Munich except—my recollection of Munich is really Mark Spitz's seven gold medals." We take Young at his word and award him and Anderson a collective score of 0.000.

ATLANTA CALLING: The FBI says that, shortly before the bomb blast at Centennial Park, the Atlanta police received a 911 warning call from "a white American male with an indistinguishable accent." Not too long ago, Johnnie Cochran was leaping from his chair to cry racism because prosecutor Christopher Darden asked a witness whether a voice he heard at the scene of the Nicole Brown and Ronald Goldman murders sounded African American. Cowed, the prosecution abandoned the issue. We couldn't help wondering what the public reaction would have been if the police had issued a description of a "Middle Eastern," "African American" or "Hispanic" voice on the Atlanta 911 call. Undoubtedly, it would have included Cochranesque indignance about the supposed impossibility of guessing someone's race from his or her accent. Not a soul protested the "white male" surmise, however—and rightly so. It's common sense to differentiate members of various ethnic groups by their speech patterns, as a host of linguists (not to mention Richard Pryor) have amply demonstrated. We hope the voiceprint helps the FBI get their man, whether he's white, or just a good impressionist.

WEAK REED: Last week the Federal Election Commission acknowledged the obvious: the Christian Coalition is not a nonpartisan educational organization but a wing of the Republican Party. The FEC zeroed in on voter guides—propaganda leaflets the Coalition dis-

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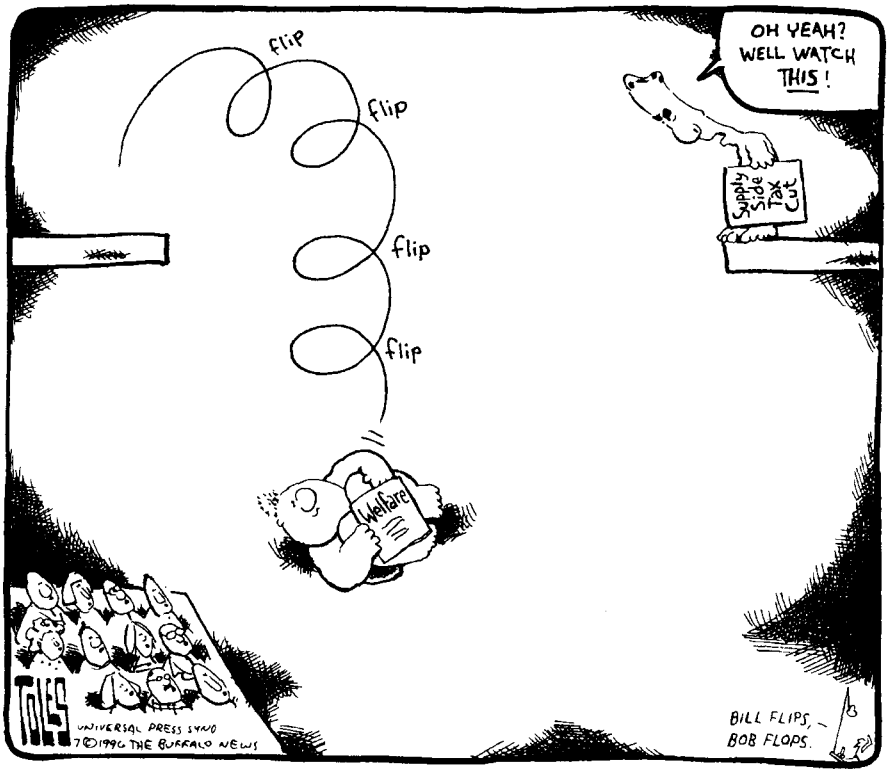
tributes in churches before elections. Coalition Director Ralph Reed responded, typically, with accusations of religious bigotry. "The courts will affirm that people of faith have every right to be involved as citizens and voters," he thundered. Yes, they do, but that has no bearing on whether the Christian Coalition uses voter guides as party propaganda. If it isn't clear why Reed would prefer to avoid this question, consider the following account:

> In 1991, the Christian Coalition undertook one of its first major education efforts in the Virginia state legislative elections, identifying pro-family voters, distributing nonpartisan voter guides, and turning out the vote with phone banks and telephone trees. The results were astonishing. In Virginia Beach, a state senator who had built his entire campaign around opposition to Pat Robertson and the Christian Coalition lost in a landslide, a defeat that rippled across the region and gave seats to other pro-family Republicans.

This is excerpted from Reed's book *Active Faith: How Christians Are Changing the Soul of American Politics.*



BE MY BEBE: Presidents have always defined themselves by the vacations they take. For Richard Nixon, lounging about Key Biscane with Bebe Rebozo said all you needed to know. George Bush's frenetic Kennebunkport trips of powerboating and horseshoes told you this was an unfocused man. When it comes to unwinding, Bill Clinton likes to do it in the company of deeply flawed men. First he vacationed on Martha's Vineyard, borrowing the home of Robert McNamara, the man who gave us lousy Fords, Vietnam and the World Bank. Then Clinton spent the summer of 1995 in Wyoming, staying at the home of World Bank President James Wolfensohn. Readers of this magazine will recall the angry letter dispatched to TNR by Wolfensohn's wife Elaine in which she said that "we" are very upset by your attack on Cornel West. Now Clinton has chosen to crash at the pad of one Max Chapman, a financier at the pinnacle of Nomura Securities, which, under his watch, has been fined $1 million by the New York Stock Exchange. What's next? A week in the Bahamas with Jim Guy Tucker?

GET OUT OF THE VOTE: Poor Dick Lamm. He's fast learning that the Reform Party, supposedly a vehicle for political change, has habits of its own that could benefit from Progressive-style reform: specifically, its tendency to genuflect before Ross Perot. First, Perot's campaign refused to provide Lamm with the list of Reform Party voters who would choose between the two men. Now, Perot is refusing Lamm's request for a debate. Although the joint appearance would take little more than an hour, the time-strapped Texan is just too busy, says supposedly impartial Reform Party "national coordinator" Russ Verney, a Perot ally. Silver lining: only 43,000 of the Reform Party's alleged 1 million-plus members bothered to take part in the sham straw poll, which Perot—surprise—won handily. For now, then, enthusiasm for Boss Ross seems thin enough that even if he discredits his own party with his unique variety of reformism, he probably won't be able to do the same to American democracy more generally.

GUY IN THE SKY: Intrigued by the advent of publicly available satellite images from space, described recently in these pages ("The Satellite Revolution" by Charles Lane, August 15)? Check out the World Wide Web site maintained by the Federation of American Scientists at *www.fas.org/eye.* John Pike of the Federation was a valuable source for the TNR piece, and has done more than any other authority to create public awareness about the declassification of high-resolution imagery and its implications.

NOT-SO-HARD QUESTION: With this issue we add one more columnist to our "Hard Questions" rotation. He is Nathan Glazer, professor of education and sociology at Harvard, co-editor of *The Public Interest* and author of many books, including *The Limits of Social Policy* and, of course, *Beyond the Melting Pot* with Daniel Patrick Moynihan. Long a contributor to these pages, he now becomes a contributing editor. •

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A third way to teach kids.

THE FEEL-GOOD TRAP

By Richard Weissbourd

In the last twenty-five years, self-esteem has become a watchword in American education. Some schools have set up self-esteem classes and days. Others tack posters to the walls that exhort and praise: "YOU CAN DO ANYTHING," "YOU ARE BEAUTIFUL." The manifest risibility of this trend has prompted a sneering backlash; *Commentary* pages and Doonesbury panels alike have lampooned the self-esteem movement as a baleful confluence of 1960s liberal indulgence and soft psychology that distracts from schools' central mission of teaching the basics. Now even Bob Dole has exploited the issue as a campaign plank. He recently attacked the demise of old-fashioned pedagogical tools such as spelling bees, ridiculing the notion that "such competitions can only deal a blow to the self-esteem of those who don't win."

Plenty of liberals as well as conservatives agree that this attention to self-esteem is not just useless but dangerous. Yet the self-esteem movement has at least tried to deal with serious problems that its critics have ignored. Indeed, the critics' back-to-basics call to teach just reading and writing will also fail large numbers of children. Instead, educators need to embark on a third path: developing a wide range of intellectual and social skills in children, and creating more sustained relationships between children and adults. Such a plan is ambitious, to be sure, but, unlike the current solutions, it at least stands a chance of helping more children prosper in adult life.

The self-esteem movement arose not only out of a national infatuation, beginning in the late 1960s, with the inner life, but also as a way to solve a host of problems plaguing children in schools. Poor and black students lagged behind their non-poor and white peers, it was argued, because racism and classism eroded their self-worth. The issue was not their ability to learn but their *confidence* in their ability to learn. Raising their self-esteem would boost their achievement. The notion fast became a panacea in some quarters, and by 1990 a California state task force enshrined "the promotion of self-esteem" as a central goal of the curriculum, calling it a "social vaccine" that would inoculate children against academic failure, drug use, welfare dependence, violence and other ills. This task force has since become the whipping boy for the self-esteem critics.

For good reason. Thousands of studies on self-esteem have shown that the tenets of the movement just don't hold up. While there are different definitions of self-esteem and problems in measuring it, a multitude of studies reach the same conclusions. Programs to raise self-esteem—defined as a positive, global evaluation of the self—are not raising it. And the very premise that greater self-esteem will boost academic achievement is simply wrong. Self-esteem has little or no impact on academic achievement, or on drug use, violence or any other serious problems. Violent criminals, studies show, often have high self-esteem. And black children *already* have levels of self-esteem similar to white children; they take an equally positive view of themselves, but they're less likely to have a sense of efficacy: they see the outside world as placing obstacles in their path.

What's going on? For one thing, self-esteem doesn't lead to greater academic achievement unless a child values such achievement—high school athletes may have high self-esteem but no interest in school—and it's no secret that large numbers of children don't. Nor should we expect self-esteem to reduce violence or encourage ethical self-conduct. Self-esteem comes in part from feeling powerful, and playground bullies, violent gang leaders and all sorts of other non-academic achievers can feel powerful. If children grow up in cultures that condone unethical conduct, they may end up feeling good about such conduct.

Further, there's a problem with the concept of self-esteem. Though some violent children have high self-esteem, the self that is being esteemed is immature, incapable of empathy, unaware of itself. Many violent children lash out not because of low self-worth but because they are highly prone to shame (that's why so much violence is triggered by acts of disrespect). Even if schools could jack up children's self-esteem, it might not effect their academic competence, their ability to manage humiliation or their maturity. These are largely separate problems and require largely separate solutions.

Even more troubling, the self-esteem movement has often been harmful. Children know when they have really accomplished something and when they haven't, and too much unconditional praise produces not self-confidence but cynicism about adults and doubts about themselves. Talking about children's selves all the time can also teach them to make how they feel about themselves paramount. As developmental psychologist Robert Karen puts it, too much talk about the value of a child's entire being "trains children to think globally, to make their selves the issue in whatever they do, and thus to be prone to both grandiosity and self-contempt."

All this advertises for seriously rethinking the entire self-esteem movement. Some of this rethinking has argued that self-esteem is the *result* of academic achievement, not vice versa; others say academic achievement is important for its own sake, regardless of what it does for self-esteem. Both groups argue that schools should be dedicated to academic achievement—in some cases

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to rudimentary skills. As John Leo writes in *U.S. News and World Report*, "[U]ntil we grapple with the real agenda of the self-esteem movement—ersatz therapeutic massage instead of learning—there will probably be no reform at all."

There's no question schools should focus on academic achievement, both for its own sake and because it builds self-esteem in some (though not all) children. While children should be aware of racism and discrimination, no amount of talking about discrimination can substitute for raising nonwhite children's achievements. And the focus on self-esteem has sometimes, as critics contend, detracted from academics; teachers dumb down curricula, inflate grades and avoid discussing real academic problems with parents. A special education teacher who works with almost all poor students told me the last thing she wanted was "for a child to fail," so she spent her time providing "a lot of hugs and kisses." It's hard to imagine a greater threat to poor children's learning than this kind of dismal assessment of their capacities.

Nonetheless, to harp on academic achievement is irrelevant and insulting to most educators. It simply doesn't answer the question they struggle with daily. Most teachers care deeply that children learn basic skills. The problem is how to overcome the hurdles that interfere with that learning. Educators know what self-esteem critics don't: huge numbers of children suffer from social and emotional problems that both shrink their self-esteem and choke their ability to learn. Some children can't concentrate in class, for instance, because they have been abandoned by a parent, or because their violence-wracked neighborhoods deprive them of an elementary sense of control, or because they live with caregivers who are too depressed to be involved in their lives. For all its failings, the self-esteem movement has at least tried to deal with these problems. To talk of academic achievement without addressing these devastating troubles is fantasy for these children.

Further, academic achievement often doesn't boost self-esteem. Many children, girls especially, achieve at high levels yet have little self-esteem. And anyone who believes academic achievement is a royal road to self-esteem should spend time with first-year law students at Harvard, who are disgusted with themselves because they find themselves ranked not at the top but wallowing somewhere in the middle of their classes.

Finally, harping on achievement ignores the evidence that both effectiveness in adult life and self-esteem depend on a wide range of intellectual and social competencies. Harvard education professor Howard Gardner has documented many different types of intelligence, including interpersonal skills, that are crucial to success in adult life. Cultivating capacities such as self-awareness, control of one's impulses and persistence needn't detract from teaching academics. Good teachers build these competencies in the course of academic instruction. Teaching literature can clearly impart all sorts of social and moral lessons.

Schools need to forget about self-esteem altogether as an explicit goal. They should instead set high expectations of children, cultivate in them a wide range of competencies, coping strategies and ethical sensibilities, and show them the value of these abilities. Nonwhite children need to be given tools for understanding and responding to discrimination while still meeting high academic expectations. If schools want children to be less violent and more ethical, they should, among other things, provide them with opportunities to give to others, help them to manage their frustration and shame when they feel disrespected, and enable them to see moral issues from multiple points of view. A teacher might, for example, ask a violent child to host a talk show on gun control, or create a classroom city government and ask a scapegoated kid to be mayor.

To prepare children for adult life schools also need to focus on something else, which neither self-esteem proponents nor critics talk about. Critical qualities that children need to develop for adulthood—persistence, the capacity to handle shame and disappointment, the ability to recognize the needs of others and to balance them with one's own—cannot be simply transmitted. They are the ingredients of maturity, and this kind of maturity typically develops when children have a certain kind of relationship with adults.

The psychoanalyst Heinz Kohut argues that a child's self matures in two ways: by being mirrored by adults and by being esteemed by consistent, admired adults. By "mirroring," Kohut meant that all children need adults who listen to and understand them and regularly reflect their understanding; such reflections develop children's sense of coherence and rightness in the world. Kohut also recognized that at certain stages of development every child needs adults whom he or she idealizes. Psychologists have long recognized that in adolescence children get a second chance to internalize the confident expectations of esteemed adults. That chance should not be squandered.

To listen and reflect, adults need first to spend more time with children. The self-esteem movement's constant praising of children is a short cut, a desperate substitute for the inability of teachers and other adults to pay sufficient attention to any one child. But time and attention are real to a child in ways that praise is not. Parents, of course, best provide this time and attention, but when parents cannot or do not do so, other adults should. This doesn't entail "babysitting": it means spending a few (or more) hours a week listening to, challenging and developing the strengths of a child.

Schools need to push beyond the academic achievement versus self-esteem debate and embark on a variety of strategies that involve adults more in children's lives. Class sizes need to come down. Schools need to work harder to involve parents, including absentee fathers, in their children's education. And schools need to keep trying to bring more adults into children's lives who

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are worthy of esteem by making teaching and other types of work with children more attractive, including through higher status and better pay. Granted, this all amounts to a tall order. Yet these steps, taken together, would be far more meaningful than focusing simply on a nostrum like returning to basics, or on a spurious metasolution like self-esteem.

RICHARD WEISSBOURD is the author of *The Vulnerable Child: What Really Hurts America's Children and What We Can Do About It* (Addison Wesley).

The keynoter's Staten Island roots.

WORKING GIRL

By Jim Sleeper

The *Staten Island Advance*, daily diary of New York City's "forgotten" white-ethnic borough, called Borough President Guy Molinari at home on July 15 with the news that his daughter would keynote the Republican National Convention. "What? Really? And here I thought I was going to be staying home from the convention to baby-sit," he said, with his characteristic familial/political spin. If Representative Susan Molinari doesn't take her 3-month-old daughter with her to the convention podium on August 11, it will be just about the only public space the newest Molinari hasn't appeared. When cameras converged on Mom's office after her keynoting role was announced, baby Susan Ruby was right there, over her heart.

Mixing family loyalty and political teamwork is the Molinari way, and if they conflict, politics gets the edge. This time, the family's women are starring (even though Molinari's husband, Representative Bill Paxon, is one of Newt Gingrich's top operatives), and her working-mom script has cowed even Beltway feminists into glossing over her votes to cut welfare and education. "I often work till 11 at night and need my hug-and-kiss quotient," she giggled last month on CNBC's "Equal Time" as Mary Matalin and Margaret Carlson teased her about how often she Takes Her Daughter to Work.

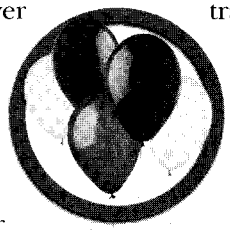
"What about when you go to vote?" asked the liberal Carlson, doing her best to sound intrepid.

"We have someone who comes in with her every day," said Molinari, turning to the camera and assuring the nation, with mock, sing-song propriety, "We don't ask our paid congressional staff to do that kind of thing. I want to make that clear." After the mommy-talk, she rattles on with impunity about "liberal media bias," "completing the Republican revolution" and Bill Clinton's broken campaign promises.

Money couldn't buy Republicans this winning a combination of cuteness and toughness. But then it wasn't needed. Molinari's grandfather was a New York assemblyman in the 1940s. Guy, who succeeded him, roomed with Senator Al D'Amato's brother Armand in Albany before going to Congress, and in 1981 got Susan, 23, a job with the Republican Governors Association. After five years in the New York City Council, she succeeded her father in Congress in 1990, representing Staten Island and a few white-ethnic enclaves in Brooklyn. In 1992, she divorced her first husband, a local boy whose business troubles had given her opponents campaign ammunition.

Again, politics got the edge: in 1994, she married into the House leadership (Paxon heads the National Republican Congressional Committee), sharing what she called "our second honeymoon" while campaigning with him for eighty-four House candidates in thirty-six states. Gingrich then made her vice-chair of the House Republican Conference, the leadership's youngest woman ever, an honor not lost on the GOP's oldest-ever presidential nominee. Molinari's ability to mix family and political teamwork began a decade ago, when the pro-choice daughter and her pro-life Dad "agreed to disagree." And so it is now with her and Bob Dole, who she says she'll praise as "a wonderful man" in San Diego.

Molinari's ethnic charm and feminine ambition recall Tess, Melanie Griffith's character in the 1988 film *Working Girl*. A secretary, Tess rides the Staten Island Ferry to a Manhattan brokerage house where she works for yuppies from hell. Bathed in affection by her girlfriend-commuters, who also smother her aspirations—"What choo want wit a speech class?" one asks her. "Yoo tawk foyne!"—Tess endures horny arbitrageurs and a jet-setting boss who steals her bright investment idea. Tess outsmarts them all and makes off with hotshot competitor Harrison Ford. Score one for Staten Island, where revenge is a big deal. (In 1993, with Molinari's support, it voted to secede from New York City, in a non-binding resolution.)



But, while Molinari seems like Tess, she takes the shuttle from LaGuardia to Washington, not the boat to Manhattan, notes former Clinton speechwriter David Kusnet, who once lived on Staten Island, wrote for the *Advance* and brought the *Working Girl* analogy to my attention. And, while Tess soared only by breaking Staten Island's cocoon and struggling alone, Molinari is buoyed by the family loyalty of both clan and constituents, as well as by her new teamwork with national Republican leaders.

Her heavily Italian- and Irish-American district, New York's 13th, includes lots of Archie and Edith Bunkers, refugees from "changing" neighborhoods in Brooklyn and the Bronx who have made enough money to drop their old lunch-pail liberalism. Yet Staten Island

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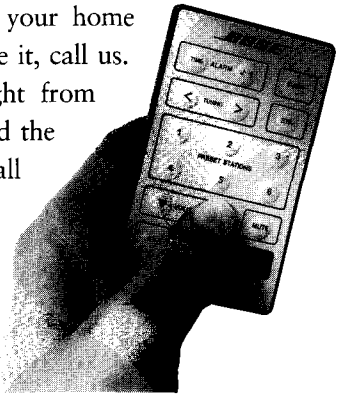

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is home to more civil servants—including more city police officers and firefighters—than any other county in the United States. This heavily unionized yet socially parochial electorate makes for a local Republican politics riddled with contradictions.

On the one hand, Staten Islanders are conservative in the peculiarly prickly manner of New Yorkers who live near both decadent Manhattan and the ravaged inner-city neighborhoods they once called home. They aren't about to have their schools and other services drained by redistribution into the maw their parents fled. On the other hand, the city workers among them want high public wages and benefits. And, racially dyspeptic though they may be, many have banked enough of an older civic culture's nobler passions so that were Colin Powell, who graduated City College before affirmative action, the Republican nominee, he would sweep the island against Clinton. A latent, social Catholicism here prefers conservative, corporatist responsibility to congressional Republicans' mindless laissez-faire.

In Congress, Molinari has negotiated these politics in different ways. At first, she voted with labor and the providers of pork, such as the Navy's short-lived homeport on Staten Island. In 1994, she backed Clinton's crime bill. And there were even strains of a novice feminism: she sponsored a version of the Sexual Assault Prevention Act of 1993 that would admit into cases past evidence against a defendant who'd never been indicted. She also touted studies, since debunked, that claimed girls are shortchanged in schools where they outperform boys.

Since rising to House leadership, Molinari's previously moderate labor, environmental and feminist ratings have plummeted. She turned against the crime bill, angering some of her own blue-uniformed constituents, and voted to cut summer jobs and housing assistance. Still, New York liberals who delight in exposing Molinari as a feminist impostor and faux-moderate opportunist miss the point: the very Devil's bargain Tess felt forced to make is, for Molinari, a win/win dilemma. Tess had to fight hard just to get a chance to choose between settling for Staten Island as a sour, parochial refuge from decrepit urban liberalism and getting recognition in glittering but colder realms. Guy Molinari has given his daughter the keys to the refuge but also a red-carpeted path to wider horizons dominated now by another patriarch, Dole. Out of familial pride, Staten Islanders are letting her have it both ways. She'll go to San Diego and show off the baby, proud Dad in tow. Like Tess, she'll disarm her detractors, and a lot of Americans will think they're watching *Working Girl II*. Not even Beltway feminists have managed to debunk that script.

JIM SLEEPER, author of *The Closest of Strangers: Liberalism and the Politics of Race in New York* (W.W. Norton), is at work on a new book about race.

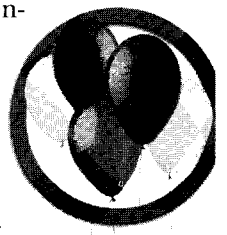
Henry Hyde's abortion problem.

WALKING THE PLANK

By Hanna Rosin

Bob Dole has every reason to be irked at Henry Hyde. In June, Dole dreamed up the perfect valentine to woo the party's moderate women: a verse of tolerance, inserted into the abortion plank. Then Hyde, the chairman of the party platform committee, ruined the romance. "I will not provide cover for something I don't believe in," fumed Hyde, who publicly threatened to quit. Dole called an emergency one-hour session with Hyde. He emerged haggard, waved off reporters and slinked into a tinted-windowed van. Two days later Dole agreed to a general statement of tolerance instead of a new abortion plank. So was Dole miffed about Hyde's bullheadedness? "Not at all," says an aide. "Dole has tremendous respect for Henry. He's a man of great principle."

Nobody, it seems, is ever mad at Henry Hyde. In his two decades in Congress, the 72-year-old Illinois Republican has built a reputation of being, oddly, both obstinate and tolerant, of holding offensive positions yet offending almost no one. As a freshman he wrote the most rigid anti-abortion bill ever passed by Congress—the Hyde Amendment—which bans federally funded abortions for poor women. A practicing Roman Catholic, Hyde's been unflinchingly pro-life since 1968, when a friend in the Illinois state legislature asked him to support a bill to liberalize abortion. He took it home, studied it and told his "dear friend" he would oppose him. But, says his spokesman Sam Stratman, "they are still great friends."



Those who might find his abortion amendment odious still lavish him with praise. Jo Blum of the National Abortion Rights Action League calls him a "person of great integrity and principle." Even Pat Schroeder, who hates everyone to the right of Hillary Clinton, wrinkles up her Irish eyes and blows a kiss at the mention of his name. Hyde apologizes when his pro-life colleagues are rude, and once prevailed on Newt Gingrich not to kick Schroeder off a delegation to visit Sweden. "You can see Hyde cringe when they start baring their fangs," says a source close to Schroeder. "She disagrees with about 99 percent of his positions, but she can always talk to him, and he's always polite."

Hyde's rare ability to be both fangless and dogmatic is what got him the job as platform chair. Gingrich first put out feelers at a meeting of committee heads in May,

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A Message from Negative Population Growth, Inc.

Why Does Our Government Allow Over One Million New Immigrants to Come Here Every Year?

. . . When a Majority of Americans Say We Should Not Admit More Than 100,000 a Year at Most!!

A Roper poll released in February showed that a majority of Americans (54%) want immigration cut to not more than 100,000 a year. So why does our Federal Government allow more than **ten times that many** to come here every year?

The poll showed that 70% of Americans – **that's over two out of three** – want immigration cut drastically to not over 300,000 a year. How in the world can our government possibly justify an immigration policy that allows **four times that many** to come here every year? Don't our elected representatives have an obligation to heed the clearly expressed wishes of the American public?

The poll also showed that a substantial number of Americans (20%) simply want immigration halted completely. In other words, **one American in five wants no immigration at all.**

We urge Congress, with the vigorous support of President Clinton, to enact legislation that would drastically reduce the present level of immigration, and thus bring our immigration policy into line with the clearly expressed wishes of the overwhelming majority of the American people.

Illegal Immigration - Out of Control

Polls have shown for years that, almost unanimously, Americans want illegal immigration stopped. Despite that, our Federal Government has done very little to reduce illegal immigration, much less stop it. An estimated 350,000 illegal aliens settle here permanently each year. **That is over three times more than the 100,000 a year a majority of Americans favor for total immigration.** These illegal settlers join a pool of an estimated **five to six million** illegal aliens who are already living here permanently in violation of our laws.

The Roper poll cited above showed that 74% of Americans (three out of every four) want illegal aliens identified and deported. So why is our government not doing just that? In 1994 only about 40,000 illegal aliens were deported. A vastly increased program of deportations would not only deter prospective illegal migrants abroad, but also motivate those already here to leave voluntarily.

The Central Issue – Overpopulation

NPG urges a drastic reduction in immigration solely because of its contribution to the disastrous growth of our U.S. population. We are on the path from our present population of 265 million to a population of nearly 500 million by 2100. **More than 90% of that growth will be the direct result of post-2000 immigration.**

Immigration is the driving force behind the population growth that is devastating our environment and the quality of our lives. **Primarily because of immigration we are rushing at breakneck speed toward an environmental and economic disaster.**

U.S. Population Size – A Vitally Important National Issue

Other things being equal, **our population size determines our impact on our already over-stressed environment and increasingly scarce resources. The size of our population is, therefore, a vitally important national issue.**

If we are to have any hope at all of creating an economy that will be sustainable indefinitely, in a sound and healthy environment, with an adequate standard of living for all, we need a smaller, not a larger, U.S. population. **But we will never be able to achieve a smaller population unless we reduce immigration to a small fraction of its present level. That is a simple fact.**

Isn't there someone among our political leaders who is willing to recognize the need for a smaller U.S.population and for public policies to achieve it? He or she would have the support of a majority of Americans. The Roper poll cited above showed that 54% of Americans believe that our country is already overpopulated.

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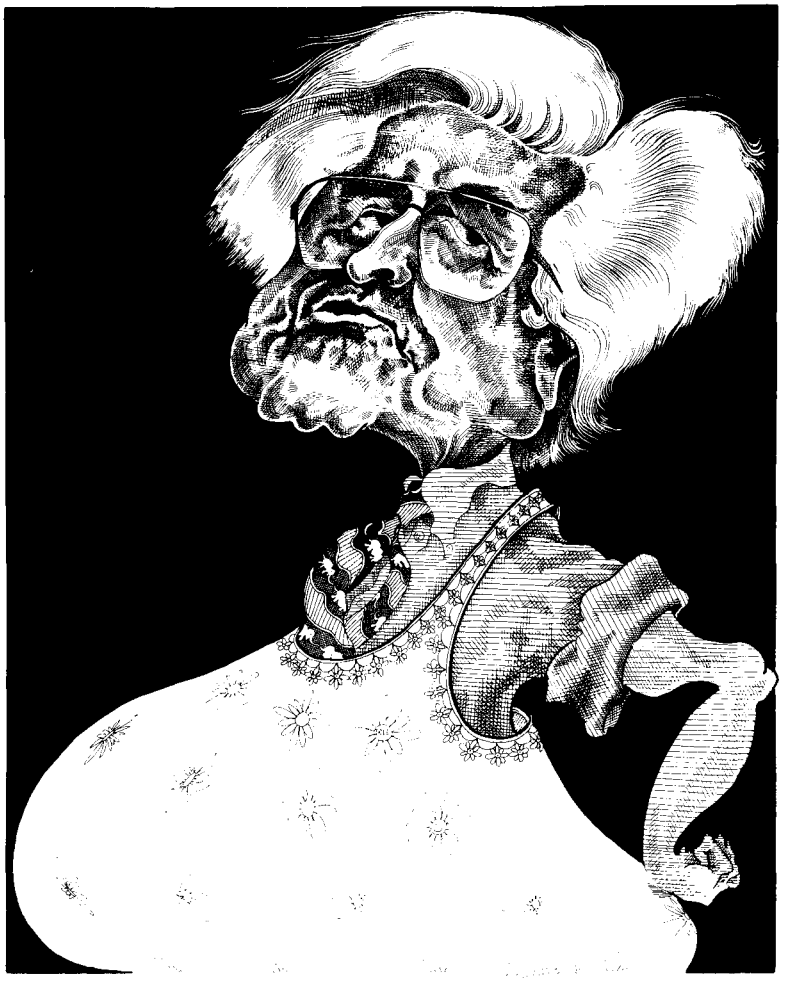
where he passed Hyde a note asking if he was interested. Hyde wrote back, "Yes, as long as there are no strings attached." Dole chose him because "he is trusted by all sides," one GOP source explains. "He's close to pro-life people, and the Olympia Snowes and Nancy Johnsons [pro-choice Rebublicans] feel comfortable picking up the phone and calling him."

Already Hyde has saved Dole from a convention squabble. All delegates to the convention fill out questionnaires, listing which of the six platform committees they prefer to sit on. Convention chair Paul Manafort opted to ignore their preferences and divide them according to his own rating system: "firmly Dole" or "marginally Dole." But Hyde overruled him. "They wanted Hyde to go in there and give a speech to the delegates about the need to subjugate personal choices after we've just dissed 85 percent of them," says a GOP source on Hyde's side. "They would sit there seething, and we'd have no credibility."



HENRY HYDE BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

The abortion compromise was also a skillful piece of work. At first, it seemed likely to cause rancor. Dole and Hyde had settled on keeping the constitutional amendment to ban abortion and adding a condemnation of late-term abortions. To soothe moderates, they added two anodyne statements calling for a "broad and diverse party" that "recognizes sometimes differing views on issues of personal conscience, such as capital punishment and abortion." Both sides were grumbling. On the pro-choice side, Senator Olympia Snowe blasted the new language as "harsh," "unworkable" and "unforgiving" and vowed to continue the fight. Tamer pro-lifers such as Ralph Reed hailed the decision as a "major victory," but Pat Buchanan, Gary Bauer and Phyllis Schlafly were irate. They called it "unacceptable" to describe abortion as a matter of personal conscience.

Yet a few weeks later both sides had lost their steam. Amid their fury, the pro-choice moderates had scheduled a press conference, complete with charts and graphs showing that every part of the country contained a large majority of pro-choice voters. They planned to launch a strategy to win over enough delegates to make Dole change the plank. But when they got to the event, the hard game plan dissipated into wispy rhetoric. One by one, the speakers huffed and puffed and swore to the American people that *if* a constitutional amendment banning abortion ever came up, it would pass over their dead bodies. But would they start a floor fight at the convention, or lobby delegates to change the plank? Representative Jim Greenwood of Pennsylvania answered: "Uh, the platform is irrelevant, and we would just like to remind the American people that a const...."

Later, Greenwood referred reporters to activists from the group Republicans for Choice for details on the convention game plan. But the activists were in the corner fuming: "Can I make it clear how miffed I am?" one said. "This was not what we planned. It was not helpful that they were so cheerful.... We'll get nowhere making nice."

The pro-lifers are harder to read, but at least some are appeased. Gary Bauer has been reduced to holding a "book signing" and a "coffee table thing" at the convention. Buchanan will rage, but half an hour away, at a field in Escondido. Even the more unhinged will hold their fire, especially if they know Hyde. As executive director of Illinois' Pro-Life Action League, Joseph Scheidler spends his evenings picking fetus heads out of the garbage ("found about 5,000 so far"). Scheidler is furious the platform will call abortion a matter of "personal conscience" because "it's a simple matter of right and wrong, cold-blooded murder, exactly the same as blowing up a 747." He minces no words over Susan Molinari, the pro-choice convention keynoter. "She's perky?" Scheidler asks. "Hitler was perky sometimes; he did that little dance. Probably the devil is perky." But Hyde? "We love Henry dearly.... He probably in his heart believes as strongly as we do. But he's in a position where he has to deal with the party."

Scheidler may heckle and Snowe may grumble a bit

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on the convention floor, but for the most part Hyde's good manners seem to have forestalled a floor fight. "He saved our hide," chuckles a Dole campaign staffer.

The civility that tamped down the abortion fight has played less well in the Congress of Newt Gingrich. Sadly, his victory for the Dole campaign may be the congressman's twilight moment, a final coup for an ambassador of an earlier era. In a House that values lockstep loyalty, Hyde floats freely. At a subcommittee hearing on school prayer, Hyde seems like a relic. Chairman Charles Canady of Florida, smug in his leather throne, takes turns with Representative Bob Inglis badgering witnesses. Canady needles a woman from the National School Boards Association; then Inglis thumps the table and waves his fist, trying to make her admit she is jealous of successful Catholic schools, unaware he is scaring the audience. From the back of the room you can see Hyde cringe and raise his eyes to the gilded ceiling as if looking for divine revelation.

When it's his turn to speak, Hyde undoes some damage: "There are so many witnesses here of such high quality," he begins, in a gentle rebuke to his colleagues,

> that I don't have time to address them all.... The races are further apart than they've ever been, yet each of us is made in the image of God. You can't get respect outside the fatherhood of God. Why are we fighting? I'm not a Muslim but I respect the mosque.... This culture is dying, going down, down, down, and the only way to save it is to raise your eyes up. I'm not a preacher, I'm a sinner. Let it be a cross on the wall or a Star of David, anything, but some objective standard of morality.

For all its hellfire rhetoric, the speech is a balm. Men relax, women loosen their grips on their children. Light as air, Hyde's soothing voice fills the cavernous room and settles on the audience like angel dust.

Hyde means the speech to showcase his skills as a noble orator, above the quibblings of his vulgar colleagues. But his younger colleagues see it differently. "He is pathologically civil," says one Republican member of the committee. "It's at the level of doctrine, like he thinks he's Churchill or something."

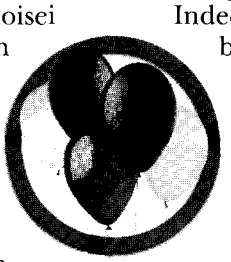
Just two years ago, Hyde was the leading contender to succeed Bob Michel as House speaker. It's tempting to imagine that world: doffed hats in the hallways, the heirs to the Founding Fathers battling it out in committee rooms. Even the threat of abortion tyranny would be amply compensated. For Hyde's rigidness on the issue only obscures his milder worldview. More typical of the old world congressman is his stand on gun control, where he breaks ranks with GOP orthodoxy and opposes repealing the assault weapons ban—exactly the type of reasoning that would appeal to the moderate women Dole is courting. But it was not to be. "To his credit, he's his own man," says a colleague who knows him well. "But a slight touch of laziness has set in over the years, a feeling that Henry Hyde's not going to kill himself going to meetings from 8 in the morning until 8 at night making sure every faction is happy. The prize isn't worth that to him." Lately it seems as if Dole can empathize. •

An unconventional history.

HERE WE GO AGAIN

By Sean Wilentz

"God takes care of drunkards, of little children, and of the United States," the Russian-born political scientist Moisei Ostrogorski remarked in 1902, on the subject of our presidential nominating procedures. Ostrogorski, like many high-minded reformers of the Progressive era, thought America's boss-ridden, coalition-based, two-party system drained the country of responsible and principled leadership. In his view, nothing better symbolized the system's ills than the national party conventions—quadrennial displays of brazen power-brokering, demagogy and drunken childishness.



Over the past decade, anti-convention talk has surfaced again, but it has been of a very different nature. Indeed, there is a nostalgia, a hunger, for the sort of boisterous (if shamelessly corrupt) free-for-alls that Ostrogorski decried. Any upset, or near-upset, in one of the presidential primaries prompts a round of lip-smacking anticipation from pundits speculating about a brokered convention that will provide a change of pace from the tedium of recent election years.

For today, it is no secret, party potentates have been emasculated, and the selection process has been front-loaded to pre-convention state primaries and caucuses. In the crudest practical terms, the con-

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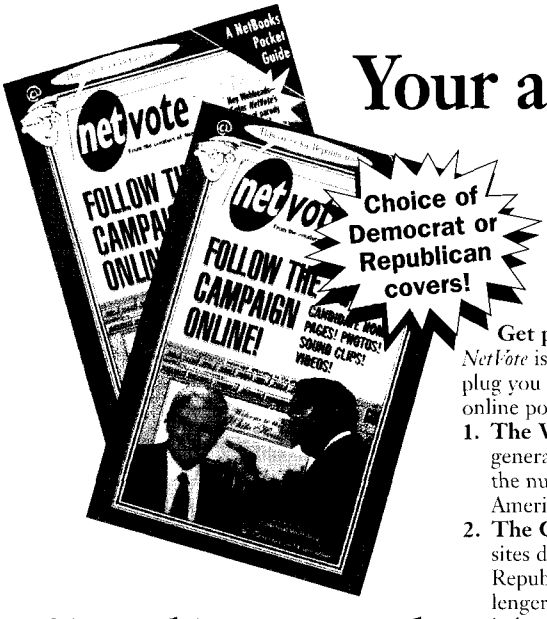

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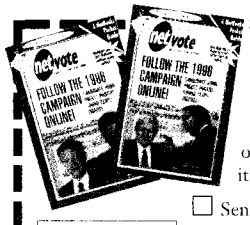

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ventions are gigantic foregone conclusions; the last time either party needed more than one ballot to nominate its presidential candidate was in 1952, when the Democrats took three turns to select Adlai Stevenson. Long ago, pollsters and media advisers became the political kingmakers, and the smoke-filled rooms of yesteryear gave way to mammoth television sound stages. The conventions now serve as little more than electronic campaign rallies (whose Nielsen ratings are dwindling each year). And so some latter-day Ostrogorskis have urged their elimination.

Modern conventions aren't meaningless, though. Foremost, they bring the candidates exposure. Bob Dole's speech to the nation on August 14 will draw him the largest audience he's ever had. And, in recent times, even with the nominations already decided and the pageantry minutely arranged for the networks, there has been ample room for fateful unpredictability: Pat Buchanan's oratory in Houston four years ago, for example, or Ted Kennedy's snubbing of Jimmy Carter in 1980, or the police riot in Chicago in 1968, each of which colored every subsequent political event of those election years. Even in an age of televised self-consciousness, more than one script is being followed at any convention—and the clash of scripts can help decide elections.

ILLUSTRATION BY ERIC BAKER FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

It's true that the conventions usually proceed more or less as planned. Yet in this lamented predictability, today's party gatherings are not deviating from the historical norm but rather hewing to it. No less than ever, today's conventions fulfill their great traditional function, the creation of what Larry David Smith and Dan D. Nimmo call "cordial concurrence" among the party faithful. America's two main political parties have always been, by definition, hodgepodge collections of rival regional and ideological factions. For three-and-three-quarters years out of every four, party factions hunker down and jostle for advantage, only rarely encountering each other in the flesh. Come convention time, though, all sides mix and mingle, to lay aside their differences and try to convince the country (and each other) that they really do have something in common, if only the desire to win the spoils of office. Of course, it's largely a fiction: after Election Day, the jostling starts all over again. But the fiction serves to mobilize voters and moderate our politics—as much today as when the first national conventions gathered in the 1830s.

It is too easily forgotten that the party conventions were originally designed not as struggles for power, but as coronations of pre-selected candidates—precisely what modern critics complain they have become. The splinter Antimasonic Party began the tradition in September 1831, gathering in Baltimore to anoint William Wirt of Virginia as its standard-bearer. Lacking any sitting members of Congress, the Antimasons could not rely on the then-customary congressional caucus to select its nominees; and convening delegates gave the useful impression that the party enjoyed substantial popular support (which, outside New England and parts of upstate New York, it did not). Three months later, the National Republicans, forerunners of the Whig Party, held their own convention, also in Baltimore, and rallied behind Henry Clay. The Democrats followed suit the next May, mainly to ratify Andrew Jackson's decision to replace his fractious Vice President John C. Calhoun with Martin Van Buren. At no point, at any of these conventions, was the outcome seriously in doubt. The whole point, then as now, was to declare unwavering faith in the nominees and to energize the party battalions.

Sectional strains over slavery, however, destroyed the relative harmony in these parties and turned the conventions into fierce, unpredictable contests. The Democrats needed nine ballots to nominate the largely unknown James K. Polk for president in 1844; eight years later, they took forty-nine ballots to nominate Franklin Pierce; and, in 1860, fifty-seven ballots produced no candidate at all, triggering the party schism that paved the way for Republican Abraham Lincoln's triumph, and for the coming of Southern secession.

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After the Civil War, rival managers jockeyed for power within both parties—cutting deals, deploying claques and occasionally resorting to the sorts of dirty tricks that gave the national conventions their colorfully sordid reputations. At the 1876 Republican convention, a rip-roaring speech by the renowned orator Robert Ingersoll on behalf of James G. Blaine prompted some of Blaine's opponents to clamber down to the basement of the meeting hall and cut off the lights, quelling the delegates' enthusiasm. (Blaine, the favorite, lost out to a compromise candidate, Rutherford B. Hayes, on the seventh ballot.) In 1896, supporters of William Jennings Bryan packed the Democratic convention's platform debate and erupted after their man's famous "Cross of Gold" address—a carefully crafted stampede that helped lift Bryan to nomination.

Sometimes, even the party managers lost control of the conventions, which led to sweltering, marathon sessions, superheated by the contending factions' rhetoric. At the Democratic convention at Madison Square Garden in 1924, urban, anti-Prohibition "wets," aligned with Alfred E. Smith, squared off against the rural, Prohibitionist "dry" backers of William Gibbs McAdoo, with a shifting array of dark-horse candidates commanding the rest of the delegates' support. After ninety-nine exhausting and indecisive ballots, McAdoo dropped out, and, four ballots later, the nomination finally went not to Smith but to one of the dark horses, John W. Davis of West Virginia, whom Calvin Coolidge duly crushed in the November election.

Despite such delicious lore, though, even the classical convention era wasn't ruled by skullduggery and chaos. It, too, was more often banal than burlesque. Between the Civil War and the onset of the Great Depression, eleven of the sixteen Democratic conventions, and ten of the sixteen Republican conventions, named their presidential nominees on either the first or second ballot. Comity, not conflict, prevailed—often even before the nominating speeches began. Some conventions were downright boring; Will Rogers, after witnessing the 1924 Republican convention, quipped that it could have been conducted by postcard. But what bored Will Rogers delighted the pols, who could proclaim the useful fiction of party unity all over again, and set the electoral machinery in motion.

After the 1920s, the conventions did see a change in tone and in mechanics. Heavy coverage by the new independent mass media—first radio, then television—dampened the flowery oratory and convinced delegates to check their more violent displays of discord. The promise of mass exposure also lured the nominees, who had customarily fashioned a pose of nonchalant aloofness toward the proceedings, to travel, in a dramatic flourish, to the host city and immediately accept the nomination—an opportunity first exploited by Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1932. And the nationalization of American politics that accompanied the New Deal, along with the sectional realignments spurred by the civil rights movement, in turn hastened the decline of state and regional party interests that had been the chief sources of convention intrigue since the antebellum era.

Above all, pre-convention primaries and caucuses came to dominate the delegate selection process. Initiated in Florida in 1904, presidential primaries arose as a democratic cure for boss rule. In 1913, the newly elected President Woodrow Wilson proposed a national primary election bill to reduce the conventions to the functions of declaring the official primary results and constructing the party platforms. Wilson's scheme went nowhere, but after World War II, primaries began to catch on as the surest routes to victory. John F. Kennedy's triumphs in 1960 in the Wisconsin and West Virginia primaries—the only two seriously contested Democratic primaries that year—dispelled qualms about his Catholicism and paved the way for his nomination. Four years later, Barry Goldwater's defeat of Nelson Rockefeller in California proved to be the coup de grace for Republican moderates and liberals. The Democrats' debacle in Chicago in 1968 spurred talk of reform, and both major parties converted fully to primaries as their chief mode of delegate selection (although recently, some state parties have favored caucuses, which they claim more effectively galvanize party activists). In 1996, only the Republicans of Alaska (who met in their own convention) failed to schedule either a state primary or state caucus meetings.

So we have ended up anticipating the precooked spectacles planned for San Diego and Chicago, assemblies that offer no suspense at all about the main issue to be decided, and where the real contest will be not among rival candidates but among the rival television networks in pursuit of ratings. Some points of passing interest may linger: Whom will Dole choose? Will Hillary speak? What entertaining poison will Pat Buchanan inject into the Republican conclave? And there will be curiosities of Ross Perot's Reform Party gatherings to ponder—conventions that *will* be conducted by postcard, at least in spirit. Otherwise, the delegates at the major conventions will play to the cameras and cheer the speechmakers on cue, with all the scintillating frenzy of a New Year's Eve celebration.

Which is not to say that the conventions will be pointless, but rather that they will be perfectly normal, in keeping with our normal, centrist political times. The drama will not come during the roll calls of the states (a ritual the Democrats might well dispense with this time, and instead choose Clinton and Gore by acclamation), but in the ritualistic communion of the party factions and personalities: Susan Molinari and Ralph Reed singing Bob Dole's praises, and Ted Kennedy and John Breaux doing the same for the president, recreating the useful fiction of party unity. At home and in the convention hall, Democrats will be reminded that they are Democrats; Republicans will be reminded that they are Republicans. And independents will hear from each party that it offers a candidate and a vision that merits their support. At a time when elected officials and the media have eviscerated trust in politics, the public needs these reminders. In this respect, the conventions are as remarkable and necessary today as they have ever been. •

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The Value of Welfare: Cato vs. CBPP, by Michael Tanner and Naomi Lopez, reviews "The Work vs. Welfare Trade-Off," published in September 1995, in light of a critique by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. Tanner and Lopez show that the CBPP study uses only 2 of 77 federal welfare programs in its calculations and fails to account for the value of noncash welfare benefits such as Medicaid. They conclude that the original study (see above) remains an accurate appraisal of the level of welfare benefits by state, and that welfare remains a rational choice for many. Briefing Paper no. 27, $2.00.

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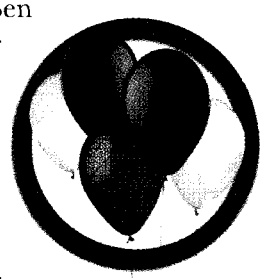
CALIFORNIA, HERE THEY COME

By Michael Lewis

July 27:

Before rejoining the Dole campaign I fly with my friend Barbara Feinman to Detroit. I have made a deal with myself, as an incentive to get out of bed in the morning. For every three days I spend with Bob Dole I will allow myself a day with someone who is not Bob Dole. Normally, I would have waited until I had earned the reward to collect it. But circumstances—namely Barbara—intervened.

Until a few months ago Barbara was happily making a living helping famous Washingtonians—Ben Bradlee, Bob Woodward, a pride of senators—write their books. Her reputation as the best ghost in town led Hillary Clinton to hire her to help with *It Takes a Village.* For eight months Barbara toiled, to the apparent approval of the First Lady. But then suddenly and without warning everything changed. One morning Barbara was First Ghost, the next she was First Enemy. She still isn't quite sure how or why she fell out of favor. But it turned out that her desk in the White House had been just a few feet from the Whitewater files that proved Hillary had taken more than a casual interest in the deal. Her proximity to the files led both Senator Al D'Amato's committee and prosecutor Ken Starr to drag her in for questioning. Since then journalists friendly to the White House have accused Barbara without evidence of all manner of ill deeds, such as helping Bob Woodward with his unflattering portrait of Hillary in *The Choice.*



Barbara, it should be said, is the least likely person ever to get caught up in a Washington scandal: she has no taste for publicity, and she would require training before she could successfully scheme or lie. When I phoned her a few weeks ago she sounded fairly certain she didn't want to have anything to do with Washington or journalists or politicians ever again. Morry Taylor's political manifesto was another matter, however.

After a few days Barbara agreed to become Morry's ghost. The chief appeal of the project to her was Morry's reluctance to spend a lot of time on it. (The bane of every ghostwriter is the author.) As long as Morry stays out of her hair, she claims, she needs only a few sessions with him and a couple of months at the typewriter. For an entire book! "I've written whole books that the authors have hardly seen before they are finished," she explains. Already she is brimming with ideas about how to deliver Morry to a larger public. She insists that the book must be written in the first person singular. "It's easier for me to remember what Morry is trying to say if I'm channeling him through me." "That's a frightening thought: channeling Morry," I say. "I've channeled worse," she says.

By mid-afternoon she is sitting in front of a TV set clutching a Griz t-shirt and watching Morry—in a pink shirt with a cigar dangling from his mouth—fast-forwarding through a videotape of himself. At length he arrives at a new commercial for Titan Wheel. "Here," he says. "This is the best part." On the screen Morry morphs into a grizzly bear; he looks for a moment like the hero of *An American Werewolf in London;* and as he morphs he emits a menacing roar. "That's my roar," he shouts with glee. "My real-life roar. They just slowed it down."

Soon enough Barbara is taping Morry.

Q: Did anyone encourage you to run?
A: No.
Q: What did your friends say?
A: You're nuts. You're crazy. You can't win.
Q: Did you ever think you could win?
A: I ain't no dummy. I knew what was going to happen. On the other hand, it relieves some guilt for me. I said what I had to say.

All the while, Morry watches the Olympics on television. The whole book, it would appear, will be generated by an author who has one eye on the tube.

Slowly it emerges that Morry can't quite get free and clear of politics. The Republican Party is refusing to let him or his money go in peace. He has just returned from a lunch Dole hosted in Washington. Every one of the primary candidates but Pat Buchanan attended, and every one (including Buchanan) remained true to form. Phil Gramm, for instance, when pressed by Dole whether he thought Ross Perot would join the race, offered more of the political acumen that led him to

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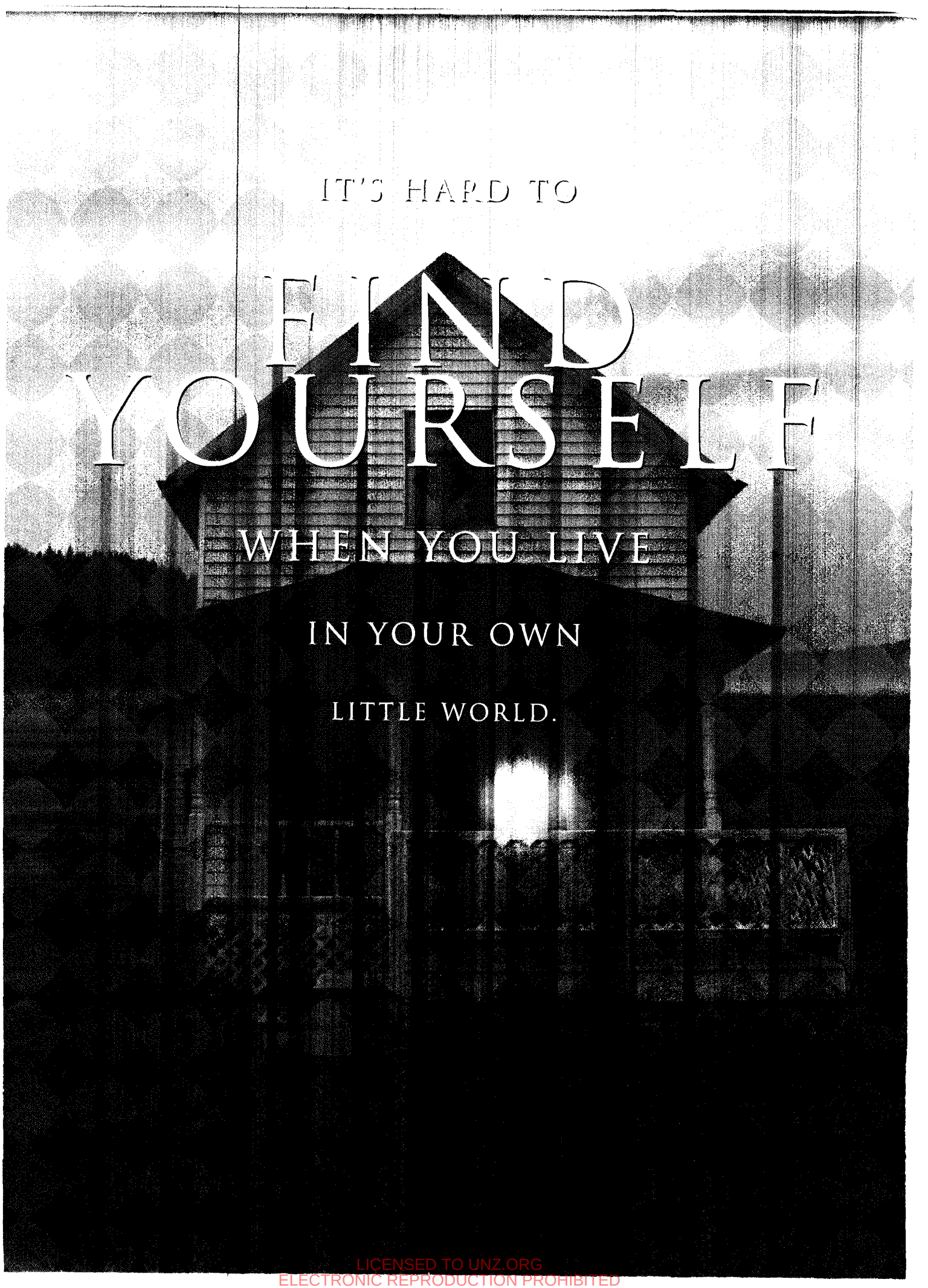

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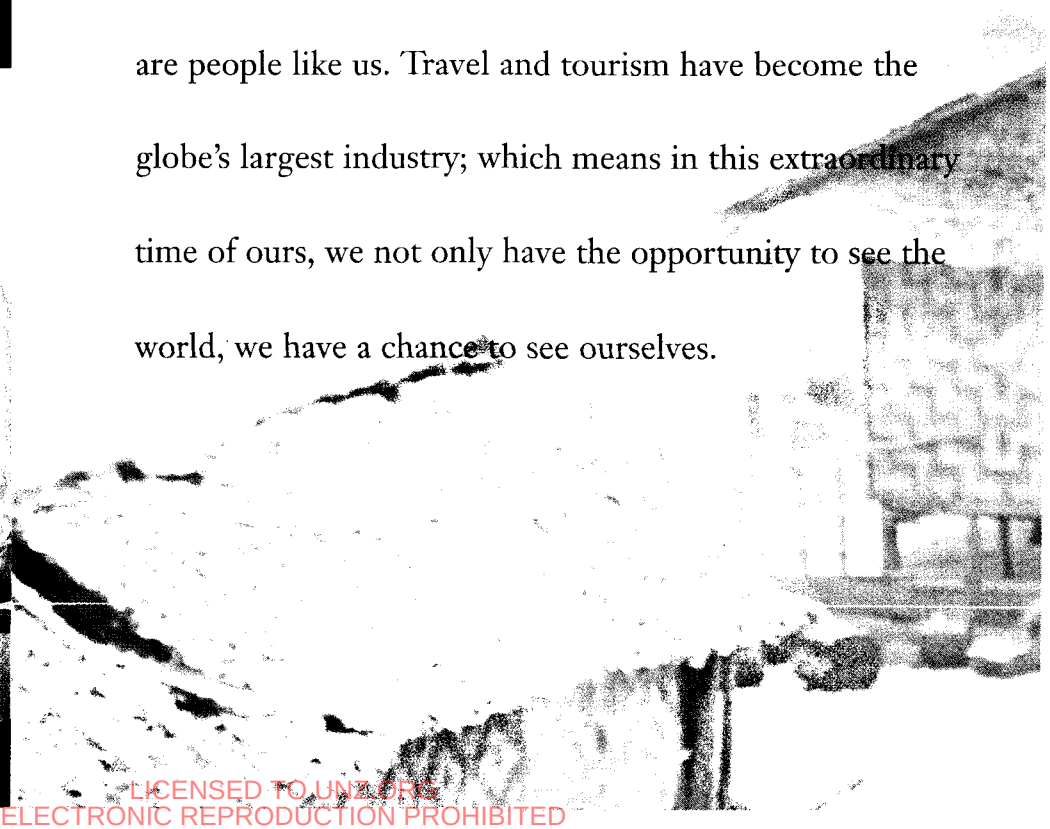

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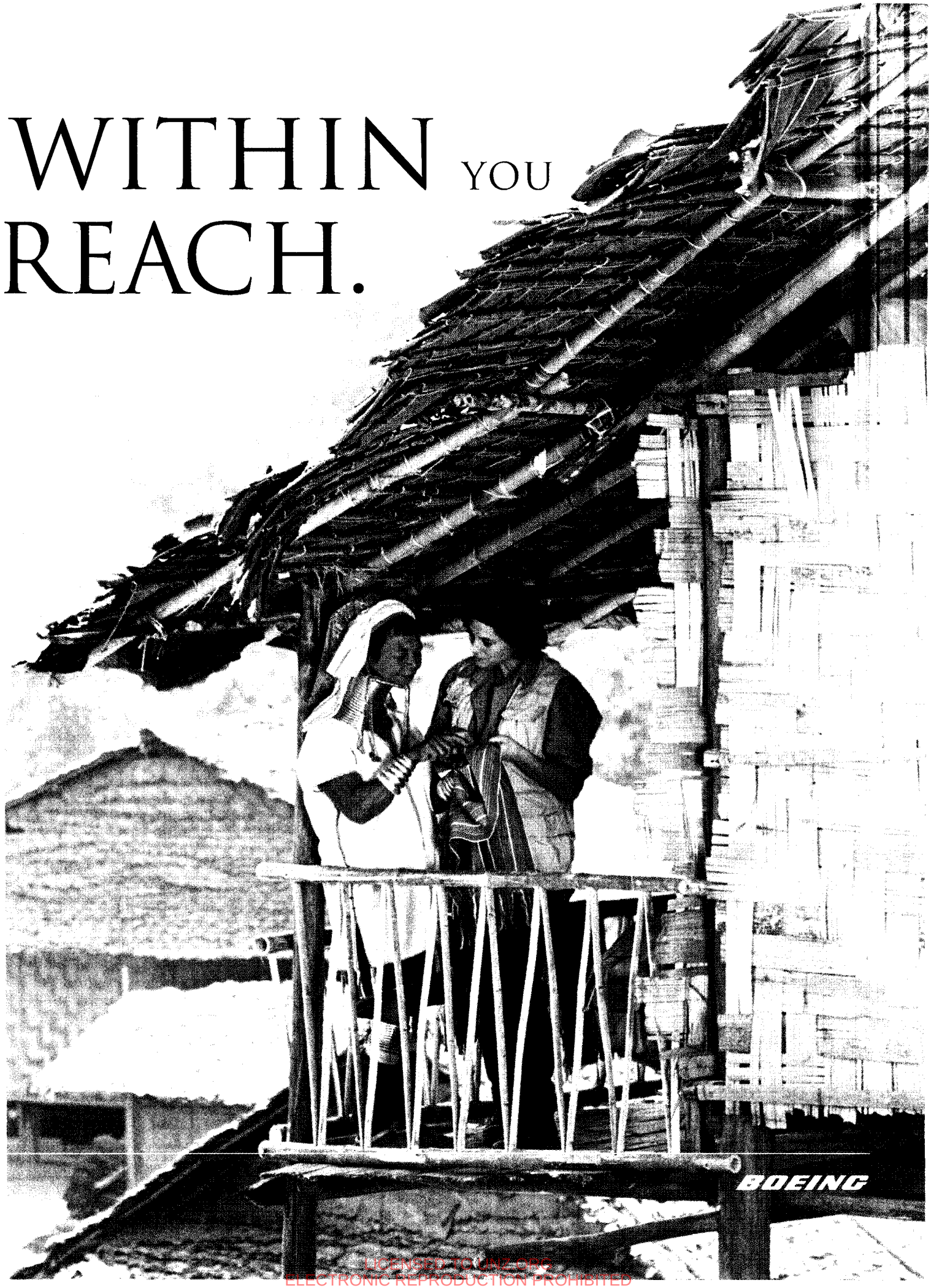

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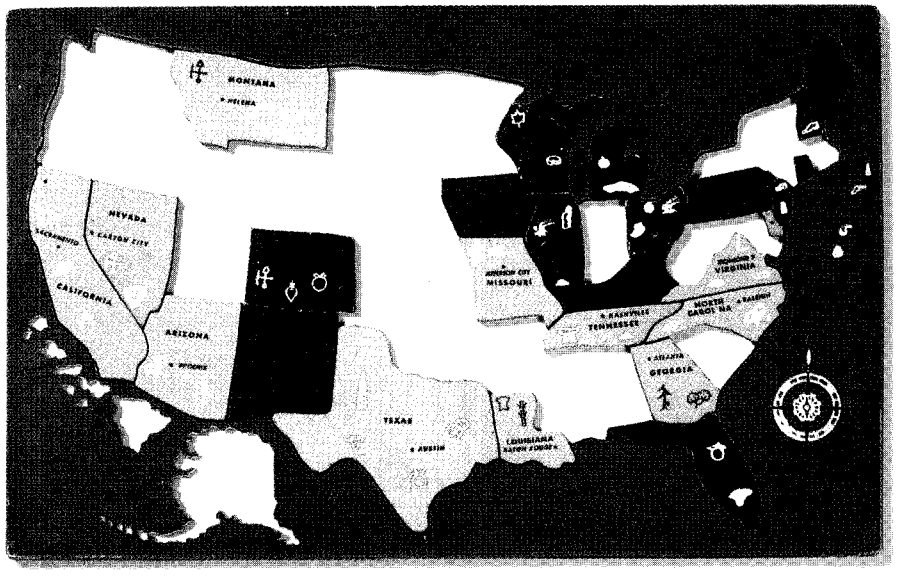
run in the first place. "Gramm said he had just been with Perot and that he didn't have the look in his eye, that he wasn't going to run," says Morry with glee. "And Forbes!" Morry grabs the inside of his cheek with his index finger and yanks hard to illustrate the point he's about to make. "Forbes is completely hooked. He'd run over a kid to get to a camera."

By the end of the lunch Morry had agreed to cough up $100,000 for what will likely be the loudest party at the San Diego convention. A friend of Morry's in San Diego who goes by the name of "New York Mike" has arranged for 5,000 bikers to roar into town on Harley Davidsons. Bruce Willis, Arnold Schwarzenegger and Ben Nighthorse Campbell (whom Morry keeps calling "Senator Lighthorse") will ride along with them. Morry himself is unsure whether he'll ride a hog, but either way he'll lead the parade, together with Dole and a truck carrying a giant Titan Wheel billboard: a grinning grizzly bear wearing a tractor tire and holding a triumphant thumb in the air.



Contested Decoys

ILLUSTRATION BY JIM HOLLOWAY FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

This is just the beginning. Morry is still groping for a way to communicate his political ideas to the public. Polls have shown that voters who had no idea who he was clearly preferred his ideas to those of the other candidates. Running for president clearly didn't work. Hence the manifesto.

In minutes he's explaining the brutal facts of presidential politics. "There are a whole group of people who want people to think that things are too complicated for them to understand," he begins. "They are called *consultants*." He figures if Barbara can help him to simplify politics for ordinary people, the book might encourage more businessmen to do it. Thus the first purpose of Morry's manifesto is to inspire more people like himself to run for president. He reaches deeply into a bag of potato chips while Barbara looks on, nervously.

July 28:

After returning to National Airport, our plane taxied right up beside the Dole campaign plane, newly dubbed *Citizen's Ship*. All the passengers gawked and whispered. The danger, for a celebrity as well as a presidential candidate, is that he might mistake this sort of curiosity for sincere interest. Dole must make this little leap every day.

I walk out of one gate and find the entire entourage sitting around the next: forty journalists, ten aides and a dozen Secret Servicemen waiting to board the Dole plane for another West Coast swing. For the next ten minutes I try hard to think of something better to do, secure in the knowledge that as soon as I am aboard the Dole plane I'll want to be off it. No sane person could possibly be interested in this trip, I think. (Do *you* read the news accounts?) To make matters worse, Dole is headed back to California. There are some states in which there is absolutely no point for Clinton to spend any time or money. There are many more states in which there is no point for Dole to spend any time or money. California happens to be one of these states.

With the help of outside consultants employed by the campaigns, and of Charles Cook of the newsletter *The Cook Political Report*, I have taken to drawing a mental map of the United States (see illustration). On the map, I try to pinpoint which states each party will legitimately contest in the presidential election. The map attempts to describe not what is true but what the campaigns *believe* to be true, and it shows that the fall campaign will take place in less than half the country. In the minds of the strategists, states fall into one of three categories: those such as Minnesota, which neither campaign believes to be in dispute (not shown); those such as Michigan, which both campaigns believe to be up for grabs (red); and those such as California, in which one campaign believes it can draw the other into ill-advised expenditures (gold). This third category holds the most delicious possibilities for the strategists. For example, there are a number of states in which the Clinton campaign is running ahead in the polls but nonetheless expects to lose. It is now spending money in Nevada, for instance, but only because Clinton is hoping that his ads, alongside his lead in the polls, will spook Dole into wasting his precious time there.

July 29:

Yesterday afternoon Dole came to life in the middle of a Montana field. He jumped on the stage with a band

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called Bucky Beaver's Ground Grubbers and started singing a Bellamy Brothers song called "Redneck Girl."

"*Gimme Gimme Gimme a Redneck Girl, Gimme Gimme Gimme a Redneck Girl.*"

After a few refrains, the bandleader whispered to Dole, "You want to try any more of this song, Bob?" Dole whispered back, "I'd like to try one more chorus with Bob Dole." And so together they sang: "*Gimme Gimme Gimme a Bob Dole vote.*"

The amazing thing about this—and Dole's subsequent a cappella performance with a group of sonorous middle-aged women—was that Dole was having fun. "That's the *first* time I've seen him campaign," said a Secret Serviceman who has been with him for months. "That was Buchanan stuff." Afterward, Dole staffers burst into the press tent to tell anyone who missed the performance what had just occurred. They cooed over it for hours, like a proud mother over the accomplishments of a child in toilet training.

But this morning, we wake up in California. There is a spare seat in the van waiting on the tarmac, and so I take it. One of the stranger aspects of flying around with presidential candidates is that only about a fifth of the journalists at any one time are allowed into all the events. This rotating cast of cameras and scribes is called "the pool." The pool's job is to observe and question, and then to report back to the other journalists what they have seen. There is no incentive for anyone to see anything different; anyone who does is immediately required to share with the rest.

Today I break the rules—and incur the wrath of the Dole staffers—because the event is not to be missed. It turns out that Dole had flown to Los Angeles to see a movie. He will attend *Independence Day* today and praise it tomorrow. The speech has already been scheduled. "He's going to cite *Independence Day* as an example of a major motion picture that makes money but preserves the notion of patriotism, mankind coming together and the fight between good and evil," says Nelson Warfield, his press person, just before we depart for the theater.

The high point in Bob Dole's career as a presidential candidate came last summer, when he denounced Hollywood for its sorry values. The only glitch in his performance was that he had neglected to see the movies he denounced. This time his advisers have wised up. They will have Dole see a movie before he passes official judgment on Hollywood. No one seems to care that there is still a small problem: it is all scripted *before* Dole has seen the movie. Think of it! The response of Dole and his advisers to the perfectly reasonable criticism—if you are going to express moral outrage about Hollywood movies, you should at least have seen the movies—isn't to hide their heads in shame and resist the temptation to feign moral outrage for votes. It isn't even to have Dole go out and see a few movies and come back and tell us what he thought about them—the honest approach to moral philosophy. It is to orchestrate a tableau for the American public in which Dole *seems* to see the movie before he offers up his moral judgment. To remain sane, I have to believe that the end result of this crap is the continued indifference of the American public.

An hour after we land in Los Angeles, we crowd around the ticket booth, waiting for the Doles to walk up and buy their tickets. They then buy popcorn and a box of Goobers and proceed inside. Interestingly, none of the journalists or campaign staffers has to go through any of the rigmarole that's supposed to create the illusion this is a regular trip to the movies. Everyone in the motorcade but the Doles—journalists, staffers, Secret Service agents—simply marches into the theater and takes a seat. The Doles, on the other hand, buy their tickets for themselves not because they are having an ordinary experience but in an effort to pretend that they are having an ordinary experience. They have come full circle in a process that removes the players from ordinary life.

The theater is already pitch black. For the next two hours the Doles remain invisible, save for the moments when an American city is blown to bits by the alien spacecraft and the theater lights up to reveal the Doles staring impassively into the abyss.

Dole emerges to be asked, of course, what he thought. Fifty-odd journalists swarm around him, and I can't make out what he says. It doesn't matter. In the van on the way home the reporters replay their tape recorders and try to decipher Dole's comments.

Tape Recorder: Mumble, mumble
Reporter One: What was that? "We won in the end?"
Reporter Two: No. Just "We won. The end."
Tape Recorder: Mumble, mumble
Reporter One: What was that? "It's a good movie. You can bring your family, too"?
Reporter Two: (impatiently) No. It's Dolespeak. Just "Bring your family, too."

And so it goes until Dole's full appraisal of *Independence Day* is assembled:

"We won. The end. Leadership. America. Good over evil. It's a good movie. Bring your family, too."

July 30:

Bob Dole woke up and gave his speech. He explained why Hollywood should make more movies like *Independence Day* and fewer like *Striptease.* Appropriately, he did this in the same studio at Twentieth Century Fox that once hosted a morally outraged Khrushchev. ("They were filming a Shirley MacLaine picture, and the ladies had can-can costumes on. Khrushchev thought it was not proper and got very upset," says the Fox employee who oversees it, as he waves his hand at the warehouse.) The speech is a bit confused. It starts out arguing that there is more money to be made in virtue than in vice—in which case the market would take care of the problem—and ends up saying pretty much the opposite.

But none of that matters. What matters is that it works. This time no one dares to suggest that Bob Dole hasn't seen the movies of which he speaks. "The nice thing about this place," says the Fox employee, "is that you can create anything in it." •

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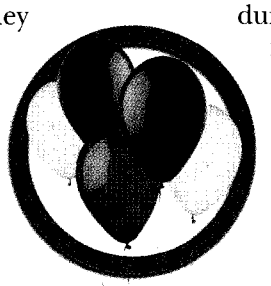
A preview of the San Diego zoo.

THE REPUBLICAN SPLINTERING

By John B. Judis

On the eve of the Republican convention, few on the right show any excitement about Bob Dole's candidacy. "I don't think anyone who is interested in political ideas as opposed to scandals can look at the '96 election and say, 'Look, is that great,' " says Newt Gingrich adviser Jeffrey Eisenach, the president of the Progress and Freedom Foundation. "This won't be the great debate about the future of the country."

What's worse, conservatives don't have a leader in waiting who could wage that great debate. They haven't since Ronald Reagan. Jack Kemp tried and failed. So did Newt Gingrich. Pat Buchanan and Pat Robertson have never represented more than factions. "With Reagan's departure, the movement has been decapitated," says Mark Thiessen, a veteran conservative activist who works at the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. "There is no single leader that can bring together the factions."



It wasn't supposed to be this way. After the Republicans won the House and Senate in November 1994, conservatives filled the airwaves with talk of revolution and realignment. Gingrich styled himself the new Reagan. "It is such a historic change that it's almost impossible to believe just how big it really is," the new Speaker declared on CNN. Contract with America pollster Frank Luntz told *The Los Angeles Times*, "Newt is a revolutionary, and he is unique in that he has really thought through how to make that revolution." Only twenty months later, however, conservatives are despondent.

Some conservatives insist their movement's doldrums are fleeting—the result of Republicans' winning Congress before they were fully prepared and then making serious tactical blunders. "The Republicans blinked at the wrong time, and went about selling the strategy the wrong way," says Nancy Mitchell, vice president of Citizens for a Sound Economy, a powerful pro-business lobbying group. Grover Norquist, president of Americans for Tax Reform and another close Gingrich adviser, argues that regardless of what happens this election year, Republicans and conservatives will rebound. "If Dole loses, it's 1972, only Dole is McGovern. Republicans keep the House and the Senate, and in two years they own the country. If Dole wins," he continues, reaching for a different analogy, "it's Johnson in 1964, and we get our Great Society."

This is wishful thinking. What's accidental and transient is not the conservative imbroglio of 1995-96 but the Republican sweep of 1994. Despite Gingrich's claims, our political system hasn't been reordered by a dominant GOP. It has simply become more unstable and unpredictable, with third parties now a permanent fixture. The unity the conservative movement achieved during the 1994 election season has faded, as the movement has reverted to the bitter factionalism of the Bush years. November 1994 represented not a conservative revolution, but a momentary reprieve from a devolution that began a decade ago.

Political movements, including that of conservatism, are transient by nature. The progressive movement lasted about three decades until the 1910s; the liberal movement endured from the 1930s through the early 1960s; and the new left that succeeded it was gone fifteen years later. Modern conservatism, born in the mid-1950s, reached its zenith with Ronald Reagan's election in 1980. It harnessed anti-New Dealers, cultural traditionalists, militant cold warriors and segregationists to fight communism abroad and the liberal welfare state at home. But the Reagan era is over. When Soviet communism collapsed and colossal budget deficits discredited Reaganomics, the conservative movement began to crumble.

At first, the post-Reagan movement didn't lose members, but it disaggregated into parlous factions. By the early '90s, four rough groupings were recognizable:

Tories: In the '70s, neo-conservatives at *The Public Interest* and *The Wall Street Journal* editorial page, reinforced by British émigrés such as Stuart Butler at the Heritage Foundation, developed a hybrid of American commercial optimism and British social conservatism. They stood for unfettered growth and opportunity—a deregulated, low-tax, international capitalism—but also for preserving the New Deal legacy of a social safety net. Their main political champion was Jack Kemp.

Christian conservatives: Also in the '70s, Fundamentalist and Pentecostal ministers in the South, angered by court decisions on abortion and school prayer and by

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One fifth of the world population... 1.3 billion people ...suffer hunger and poverty. Dedicated scientists everywhere are responding with a fervent commitment to develop more abundant, healthier, more economic crops. ❦ With its tradition of making the desert bloom, the Weizmann Institute of Science in Rehovot, Israel, continues to nurture pioneering projects in agricultural research. For example, Weizmann scientists have used genes from wild wheats native to the Fertile Crescent to achieve dramatic improvements in the nutritional value of cultivated wheats. Potato seeds developed at the Institute may produce revolutionary disease-free crops of this crucial staple. Several Arab countries rely on superior cucumber varieties developed at Weizmann. Plant geneticists, chemists and mathematicians at the Institute are cooperating to protect wheats from herbicide damage. Together with Third World experts, Weizmann researchers are fighting devastating parasitic weeds in the Middle East and Africa. ❦ Scientists in many countries are mobilizing new skills and insights to confront the world's food crisis. Public and private support has never been more urgent for their endeavors.

The Weizmann Institute, founded in 1934, is a community of 2,300 scientists, engineers and scientists-in-training engaged in a full agenda of 800 research projects ranging from basic medical research in cancer, AIDS, neurosciences and children's diseases to chemistry, physics, computer science, agriculture and the environment.

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government attacks on segregated Christian academies, began to organize politically within the Republican Party. Initially sponsored by the Washington-based new right, Christian conservatives eventually developed their own movement, led by the Christian Coalition.

Laissez-faire conservatives: After the cold war, free market libertarians who had broken with conservatives over the Vietnam War regained their standing within the right. They were joined by a growing number of anti-government movements—focused on taxes, guns, environmental regulation and property rights—and by corporate lobbies eager to roll back regulation. Extending from the Cato Institute to the National Rifle Association, they constituted the core of what Grover Norquist called the "leave us alone" coalition.

Old Right conservatives: Economic competition from abroad and the rise of a new global economy dominated by multinational corporations helped revive Old Right movements against free trade, foreign aid and immigration. These Old Rightists include traditionalists who want to preserve the culture of the Southern Confederacy, and workers and businessmen infuriated by cheap imports. Their views are articulated most prominently by columnist Pat Buchanan.

During the Bush years, strife among these groups was rampant. Tory "neocons" and Old Right "paleocons" warred over Israel and immigration, while libertarians and the Christian right quarreled over family matters. In the 1992 Republican presidential primary, Bill Bennett accused Bush challenger Buchanan of "flirting with fascism." Ross Perot's third-party candidacy divided the movement further, drawing off Old Right and laissez-faire conservatives.

Republicans claimed their 1994 victory would end the rancor and herald a new conservative movement that would transcend and unite these factions, which had crippled the party two years earlier. But it was not to be. The main source of Republican unity in that election was Bill Clinton. His initial budget and stimulus package and his healthcare plan brought GOP factions together in opposition. Clinton's betrayal of his populist promise on taxes, welfare and family values issues angered swing voters, who backed Republican congressional candidates.

If the 1994 GOP sweep wasn't revolution, it wasn't realignment either. Realignment occurred only in the South, and even there Republican victories represented its end, not its beginning. Just as the Democratic capture of the black and Northeastern vote in 1964 completed the Democratic realignment of 1932, so the GOP capture of the South in 1994 closed a process that had started three decades earlier. Although the Republicans can now claim a solid Southern base, they still lack an impregnable majority in national and congressional elections. If anything, the preponderance of Southerners in Republican leadership positions raises the specter of the GOP being too closely identified nationally with the ethos of the white Protestant South.

Most Republicans acknowledged privately that the Contract with America did not play an important role in the election itself. Even a month after the election and after much ballyhoo about the GOP agenda, a *New York Times* poll found that 73 percent of voters had never heard of it. Yet Gingrich and other conservative leaders still hoped the contract would lay the basis for a permanent Republican majority. It was supposed to unite the disparate elements of the new Republican congressional majority around an agenda that had broad popular appeal, particularly to the 1992 Perot voters. Instead, the pursuit of the contract eroded the Republicans' popularity and reopened the old divisions.

Conservatives in Congress ascribe the Republicans' failure to enact the whole contract to tactical errors. But if Gingrich and Dole had passed all their bills and signed them all into law, they might be in even worse political shape than they are now. Gingrich, Dick Armey and Frank Luntz correctly detected voters' strong anti-statist sentiments, but they translated these sentiments into enthusiasm for a balanced budget amendment and then into support for an actual balanced budget in seven years. They also assumed skepticism about entitlements and regulation could be translated into a mandate for budget cuts and radical deregulation. They were wrong.

Gingrich and Dole also allowed laissez-faire conservatives and their corporate allies a strong hand in crafting the bills they introduced. In part, they did so out of agreement with laissez-faire principles. But they were also swayed by political obligation to groups that had helped to kill Clinton's healthcare bill and to bankroll GOP candidates. Laissez-faire conservatives and business lobbyists ended up virtually writing Dole and Gingrich's bills on regulatory reform and property rights. As a result, these bills catered more to corporations than to the small farmers and fledgling entrepreneurs the contract had promised to defend. Corporate lobbies also shaped the Republicans' Medicare cuts, which targeted consumers, not providers, and which created lucrative opportunities for private insurance companies.

As the Contract with America faltered, so did its power to unite conservative factions. First to bolt the coalition were the Tories. Neoconservatives and supply-siders condemned the Congress's obsession with a balanced budget and its attack on the poor. "Republicans will never be a national party as long as they have a tendency to tear down the social safety net," economic consultant Jude Wanniski says.

Tories also criticized the contract's environmental program. They viewed Cato and Citizens for a Sound Economy as proponents of a business-driven materialism that had little in common with traditional conservatism. "It is not my conservatism," says David Kuo, director of American Compass, which devises conservative approaches to aid the disadvantaged. "I don't understand their vision for America. It is a deregulated, low-interest-rate, happy corporate executive world where every environmental resource can be turned into hard cash." Columnist Jim Pinkerton, who labored for a compassionate conservatism in the Bush administra-

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tion, called the groups that fronted for business lobbies "corporate whores."

In Republican presidential politics, the Tories struck out on their own, too. In the debut issue of *The Weekly Standard* last September, editor Bill Kristol urged Colin Powell to seek the GOP nomination. Kemp and Bennett followed suit. They surely realized that Powell's nomination would have driven many Old Right and Christian conservatives from the party, but Kristol, Kemp and Bennett were advancing their own Tory view of where the party should go. Wanniski, Kemp's tutor in supply-side economics, went further. After Dole had secured the Republican nomination, Wanniski urged Kemp to run as the candidate of the Reform Party.

Finally, Tories have been sounding the alarm about the disaffection of Republican women. A *Weekly Standard* cover story urged conservatives to stop trying to criminalize abortion. Once afraid to criticize the Christian right, many now vent their misgivings. Says Pinkerton, "The Christian right, which was an enormous shot in the arm during the '80s, is now having the opposite effect."

Gingrich and Majority Leader Richard Armey had hoped that the Republican victory would polarize the parties between right and left, but, as Kristol's endorsement of Powell indicated, the experience of the contract had moved the Tories back toward the center. The same thing happened on Capitol Hill. For instance, Indiana Senator Dan Coats, long seen as a stalwart of the right, has become a close ally of Connecticut Democrat Joe Lieberman. Coats recently challenged laissez-faire conservative Larry Craig of Idaho for chairman of the Republican Policy Committee. Says Coats aide Tim Goeglin, "On a lot of issues the traditional labels of liberal and conservative no longer apply."

Like the Tories, laissez-faire conservatives are also critical of what happened to the contract, but they often take a diametrically opposed view of what went wrong. "We didn't feel the contract went too far," says David Boaz of the Cato Institute, who typifies this view. "We thought it was a very modest first step. We felt the American people were ready for much bigger change."

Recently, the factionalism has worsened. In his primary campaign this year, Pat Buchanan, avatar of the Old Right, led the assault on other wings of the Republican Party. He attacked Republicans in Congress for cutting Medicare and depicted Washington conservatives as shills for global capitalism. When Powell toyed with a presidential bid, Buchanan threatened to launch an independent campaign if the general were nominated. Now opposed to his GOP rivals on a vast range of issues, Buchanan and his followers appear to be moving toward a third-party effort—if not in 1996, then in 2000.

ILLUSTRATION BY ERIC BAKER FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

The Christian right, too, protested the moderating impulses of the Tories, despite the efforts of Christian Coalition Executive Director Ralph Reed. Though publicly seen as the face of the Christian right, Reed is in fact a political realist who has found himself increasingly isolated within his own movement. As Reed was nurturing his links with the Tories and GOP moderates, other Christian conservative leaders and the movement's rank and file went on the offensive. When Kristol boosted Powell, Christian right leaders held a press conference to blast the general. At the Texas Republican convention this June, Reed and Phil Gramm just narrowly kept Christian activists from denying Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison, who supports abortion rights, a place on the Texas convention delegation. The rightists did succeed, however, in ousting pro-choice delegate Representative Henry Bonilla.

Could the fracas at the Texas convention be a preview of the Republican convention in San Diego? To avert an explosion, Dole has tried to include almost every faction within his campaign. Even Buchanan's heterodox views on trade are represented through Dole adviser Robert Lighthizer. Says Wanniski, "Dole is the embodiment of all the myriad divisions within the Republican Party." But Dole's problem as a candidate is that he appears incapable of resolving or transcending these divisions. Instead, as he caters to each faction, he is buffeted from position to position—on abortion, on

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tobacco, on taxes and the deficit, on Social Security and Medicare. Dole can't take a clear position on any burning public issue without offending one of his key supporters or advisers. As a result, he looks directionless.

Dole's conservative supporters believe that as president he will accede passively to initiatives from Gingrich and Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott. *Wall Street Journal* editorial page writer John Fund calls him a "serious vending machine"—implying that if conservatives invest in his election and administration, they'll get back exactly what they put in. Says Dole backer Mark Thiessen, "What everybody is looking for is a president who will stop vetoing our bills and who will fill his administration with hardcore conservatives." But this assumes two things: that during a Dole presidency conservatives in Congress will recreate a united front; and that Dole, once in office and reinforced by the separation of powers, will remain as passive in the face of conservative pressure as he has been on the campaign trail. Neither will likely happen. Consider what the two most likely outcomes of this November's election might mean for conservatives.

First, Dole wins and the Republicans retain both Houses. Norquist, citing the LBJ precedent, says conservatives will then be able to pass their program as Democratic liberals passed theirs in 1965. But there's another analogy: the Carter administration. Although Carter took office with veto-proof Democratic majorities, he proved utterly incapable of uniting the factions within the Democratic Party. Instead, the domestic policy chaos that prevailed under his watch paved the way for Reaganism. Similarly, a Dole presidency—with the aging, stubborn Kansan trying to maintain control while conservative leaders battle to succeed him—could lay the basis for a Democratic millennium.

Pinkerton argues that if Dole wins, conservatives will fall into line. "The Republicans are deferential and will stick with their own president," he says. But that sure didn't happen with George Bush. Bush's loss in 1992 stems from the Republican revolt against the tax hikes in his 1990 budget. Led by Gingrich, House Republicans refused to support the tax increases, dramatizing what would become a central issue in 1992. If Dole is elected, it shouldn't take long for him and congressional leaders to begin squabbling. It might happen as soon as his first budget reaches the House floor.

The alternate scenario: Clinton wins but the Republicans keep at least one house of Congress. Norquist says the Republicans will then function as the Democrats did in Nixon's second term, creating the conditions for victories in 1974 and 1976. But it's well to remember again the Carter model; four years after the Democrats recaptured the White House, they were in ruins. Their problem, like the conservatives' now, was that they were united only in opposition. Once in office, they couldn't govern effectively.

How conservatives would fare under Clinton would depend partly on Clinton himself. If he took advantage of the new center in American politics and built a bipartisan coalition between compassion conservatives like Coats and moderates like Lieberman, focusing on social welfare issues, he could cripple conservatives. If he reverted to the behavior of his first two years in office, then he might indeed abet a GOP revival.

Conservative success under Clinton would also depend on whether Gingrich, Lott and other conservative leaders can transcend the movement's divisions. Norquist argues these divisions are surface scratches. "Ten years from now you'll look back at this period of the Republican Party, and you won't see divisions," he says. "The establishment frames the debate in terms of abortion, because it is the only thing going on." But abortion is only the tip of the iceberg. Try finding a unified conservative position on environmental regulation, the minimum wage, trade, immigration, balanced budgets, flat taxes and value-added taxes, Social Security, public housing, defense spending, Bosnia, Russia, China and GATT.

Despite the heady talk of two years ago, American conservatism betrays symptoms of a movement in decline. It lacks a national leader (compare the Progressives after Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson). It is riven by factionalism that blows up into primary challenges and third-party efforts (compare the 1924 Progressive Party candidacy of Robert LaFollette). And it displays a lack of intellectual self-consciousness and philosophical reflection. At the dawn of the conservative movement in the '50s, and during its final ascent in the late '70s, it was propelled by intellectuals and by publications that drew the movement's strands together into an effective politics. There is no equivalent today to the *National Review* of the 1950s, *The Public Interest* of the '70s, or to William Buckley, James Burnham, Russell Kirk and Irving Kristol. Except perhaps for the eccentric *Chronicles* and Heritage's *Policy Review*, today's conservative publications lack philosophical heft. The most interesting new journal, *The Weekly Standard*, is mainly an extension of television punditry.

It's strange to say, but Democrats may be in better shape than Republicans and conservatives. At least they understand the need for a new synthesis. In the last few weeks alone, two Democratic organizations, the Democratic Leadership Council and the Campaign for America's Future, have issued ambitious manifestos, but no similar conservative efforts seem to have appeared during the last year. Why not? "I don't think there is any question about the conservative agenda," says the vice president of a conservative think tank (who insisted on not being quoted by name). "The question is what political tactics and strategy to follow. I don't see any soul-searching. My view is that the conservative agenda remains very popular with the American people. It is just going to take a while to get enacted." That kind of response is not the mark of a movement on the verge of a revolutionary change. It indicates, rather, a movement that has become old and complacent and that has lost its capacity for self-examination. •

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THE HARD QUESTIONS

Life in the city

In 1977, President Carter came to the South Bronx, posed among the ruins and said that now that he was president something would be done. In 1980, candidate Reagan came to the South Bronx, posed among the ruins and said if he were president something would be done. Can anyone imagine candidates Clinton or Dole doing something similar this year?

The "urban crisis," which played so large a role in domestic politics in the late 1960s and 1970s, will not, we can be confident, be an issue this election. Not that it won't be discussed in some other context. But the term "urban crisis" was more than shorthand for the poverty and crime, poor housing and poor schools, that plagued cities then and remain today. It implied an approach to those problems—symbolized by the visits of politicians to scenes of urban disaster. This was something the federal government could and should do something about.

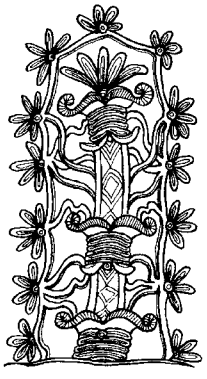
To speak of a national urban crisis meant that devastated inner cities were not simply matters for New York, or Chicago, or Detroit, but a national problem like the Depression of the 1930s, out of which came, for example, federal public housing. And the federal government, which had devised a national program of urban renewal in the 1950s and 1960s, was expected to respond.

But by the late 1970s the federal government already faced substantial deficits, and what it could, or should, do was no longer clear. Reagan settled the issue: Washington would do as little as possible. His critique of wasteful and mindless federal spending had a good deal of merit. Nonetheless, the case for deep federal involvement in the problems of cities, as a matter of logic or even justice, was persuasive then, and it is persuasive now.

For fifty years, urban experts have argued that the federal government bears some responsibility for urban blight because of two major federal programs: Washington made it easier for people to buy homes through programs of mortgage assistance and rationalization, which began in the Depression and expanded in the postwar years; and it built a major system of federal freeways, which made it easier for aspiring homeowners to move to the suburbs, where land was cheaper. Cities had once dominated their hinterlands, annexing additional land as they developed, but in most of the United States this was no longer possible.

The wealthier suburbs did not want to be annexed, and state law protected them. Cities were left to cope with their problems without the resources of an entire interlinked metropolitan region, because the suburbs did not want to be subjected to higher city taxation, even though many who lived in the suburbs worked in the city and drew their income from it.

There's more. The federal government also imposed expensive mandates on cities (for example, expensive requirements governing the education of handicapped children). One effect of the federal programs encouraging home ownership and mobility was to contribute to the separation of black and white, and to reduce the resources available in cities for the assistance of the urban poor, increasingly black, or in some places, immigrant. Poverty, race, immigration—these are, after all, national problems.



Metropolitan government was once seen as a possible solution. By drawing the wealthier suburbs into a common political framework, the central cities would become less dependent on federal aid. But the suburbs, of course, were not interested. The United States is not Great Britain, where Parliament can shape city boundaries and responsibilities as it will. The federal government can't, and the states won't, unless one can prove that rigid state and town boundaries infringe on the constitutional rights of minorities. (In New Jersey, the plaintiffs have made just such a case in the lengthy *Mt. Laurel* litigation, the subject of two recent books—*Suburbs Under Siege*, by Charles Haar, and *Our Town: Race, Housing and the Soul of Suburbia*, by David Kirp, John Dwyer and Larry Rosenthal. New Jersey now requires suburban towns to enact zoning regulations that permit denser, cheaper housing.)

So the cities are saddled with problems that are, for the most part, beyond their capacity to deal with, and for which they are, local mismanagement notwithstanding, mostly not responsible. Yet today's political realities are such that major outside assistance, whether from regional, state or federal government, will not come. The riots of the late 1960s spurred a good deal of federal assistance, but the condition of the federal budget in the 1990s, with its huge fixed and rising costs for Social Security, Medicare and debt management, is such that even riots will not matter now.

While the mayors complain bitterly, and justly, a strange thing has happened: as federal aid has dried up, as hope for new programs has waned, it has turned out that many cities *can* attack problems and even undertake major improvements with their own resources, public and private. One reason the presidential candidates won't go to the South Bronx is that the photo opportunities are not as good as they were for Carter and Reagan. There has been so much new building and rehabilitation of trashed apartment housing that the background of urban devastation is no longer impressive. New York City has poured billions into this effort, has found scores of community groups willing and able to serve as developers and landlords, and has built many new and rehabilitated housing units using a creative mix of city, state and federal funds. This was not the best way for New York to deal with its housing problems: the abolition of rent control, the shrinking of the regulatory maze, the reduction of its crippling tax burdens, would have been infinitely better, but those were no more likely politically than was expanded federal aid. And the new pattern of small-scale community housing is at least better than the huge housing projects that New York threw up with abandon in the age of federal largess.

Other cities have done other things. Many are building enormously expensive stadiums in their misguided competition for sports teams. The cities somehow find the resources for these. (The federal government, with no intention to do so, helps—they are largely built with tax-exempt bonds.) In other cities we have seen elaborate new central libraries, museums and restored waterfronts, with minimal federal aid.

Cities have been managing, some wisely, many otherwise, some not at all owing to the scale of their problems. But what the demise of the urban crisis as a national issue reflects is not only that there's no point in trying to get more from the strapped federal government, but that when central cities are thrown on their own resources, there is still much they can do. That, at least, is good news.

NATHAN GLAZER

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BOOKS & The Arts

Stanley Kauffmann on Films

Scotland Now, England Then

We've plunged into drug-addicted lives in just about every American city, and in London, Paris, Berlin, Helsinki and Rome. Now it's Edinburgh. **Trainspotting** (Miramax) is so cannily dressed up with all the relatively familiar horrors that one can almost doubt its honesty of intention. It seems to be saying, "Oh, you think that Edinburgh is behind the times, do you? Well, just look at *our* junkies."

Except that many of us would not understand it if the film did actually say it. Most of the dialogue is spoken in thick Lallans, and less than half of it is comprehensible. (Oddity: Irvine Welsh's novel, from which the film is taken, is largely in that dialect, but John Hodge's screenplay, though spoken that way, is published in straight English.) A few patches are subtitled, but the general effect is of watching an opera without having read the libretto. We sort of know what's happening.

Not that it's highly interesting. The film opens with a couple of young men running from the police through city streets while the calm voice of one of the fugitives recites a quiet litany of the choices he has *not* made, the usual stuff of a comfy life. He is Renton, one of a small group of young men and women whom we now see living in the midst of grunge, while the baby of one of them crawls amid the discarded needles. Soon the baby dies of neglect by her addict mother, who screams with grief until she gets another needle.

Aside from some pub fights and occasional sex flings, the story centers, in its lax way, on Renton rising above his fellows. This he does at last in London by stealing the money that all of them have earned through a heroin sale. Renton moves on, to acquire, as he says, all the comfy stuff he derided in his opening monologue. Does this signify the bourgeois defeat of drug-supported idealism?

Danny Boyle, the director, begins with a touch of Richard Lester and the (running) Beatles, then moves on through so many reminders of earlier drug films that we sometimes feel he has moved his cast into settings and set-ups abandoned by predecessors. Even the occasional fantasy and comic scenes don't burst with originality. Except for Renton, the cast is largely made up of grotesques. The one pungent performance is of a sociopath, an alcoholic, not a junkie, played by Robert Carlyle.

The title, says A.L. Kennedy in a newspaper comment, "refers to the utterly pointless British hobby of gathering data on locomotives—a pastime that [Irvine] Welsh equates with the sad hobby of drug addiction." Thus the title is about as helpful to us as the thick dialect.

In the late 1950s, when the early plays of Osborne and Wesker began to come this way, many Americans felt that, whatever gifts these writers had, they were suffering from time-lag. We had discovered the proles as protagonists some twenty-five years earlier. For us, there was a slight, inevitable touch of naïveté about those plays. Not with *Trainspotting*. The people who made it knew very well that they were adding to a long line of predecessors. Except for its Scottish setting, they cannot have believed that they were doing anything more original in this kind of film than the next James Bond film will do in its genre. A new voyeurism has arisen in the last two decades or so, and *Trainspotting* caters to it—an addiction to addiction-watching.

Miramax, which distributes *Trainspotting*, has set up a small sharp contrast by releasing **Emma** so soon after. Two of the actors in the first film are in the second. James Cosmo, who plays Renton's father in the first picture, is Mr. Weston here. Ewan McGregor, who plays Renton, is Frank Churchill in the Austen film. In both films McGregor has to contend with a familiar role: the smack addict in the first and in Austen the robustious romantic figure comparable to John Willoughby in *Sense and Sensibility*—he comes in with dash, then proves a temptation to the heroine but is an eventual disappointment.

Emma was adapted and directed by Douglas McGrath, who previously cowrote *Bullets Over Broadway* with Woody Allen and did the screenplay for the remade *Born Yesterday*. This is McGrath's first directing job. He is a contributing editor of THE NEW REPUBLIC so, for more than the usual reasons, I wish I could be enthusiastic about his film.

His adaptation of the novel is as complete as two hours would allow. What it lacks texturally is what no adaptation could adequately supply: the gleam of the Austen prose. In Austen the writing is much more than the context of the story, it is the source of most of the irony

FILMS WORTH SEEING

Cold Comfort Farm. *Wry English humor, 1932. A hoity-toity London miss set down among woolly rustics, to the eventual pleasure of all. (Reviewed 5/27/96)* **Courage Under Fire.** *About our latest war, in the Persian Gulf, but couched in venerable military ethos. Two investigations of conduct and misconduct, smoothly handled. (7/29/96)* **Manny & Lo.** *Lisa Krueger's first feature, about two sisters, 11 and 16, living on the road, itself finds the kind of freedom that the sisters are looking for. (8/12/96)* **Walking and Talking.** *Nicole Holofcener's first feature, about young women in New York, takes us through some familiar walking and talking but does it with brio and with lots of fine-detail realistic acting. (8/12/96)* **—SK**

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and wit. Instance: "Emma perceived that her taste was not the only taste on which Mr. Weston depended, and felt, that to be the favourite and intimate of a man who had so many intimates and confidantes, was not the very first distinction in the scale of vanity." Not exactly dramatizable. In the film of *Sense and Sensibility* the loss of the prose was less hurtful because the story itself is stronger. But in *Emma* that loss reduces the heroine to a mere pain in the neck. Austen herself said that she didn't think anyone would like Emma, but she was underestimating the prose-prism through which the young woman would be seen. In the screenplay we are face to face with Emma, unmediated. Whatever irony exists is in the occasional voice-over, as, for instance, in the closing comment that Mrs. Elton addresses to us at Emma's wedding.

McGrath's directing is not as helpful as it should be. Many scenes begin with arrangements of people as for the rise of the curtain on an old-time theater scene, yet—again—without irony. His eye is seduced by the blatantly pictorial, a walk along a shaded canal studded with lily pads, a shot past a giant tree so magnificent that we think: O.K. already, it's a great tree. Not often does McGrath give us a touch of cinematic incisiveness, vitality. Even the walks down village streets seem to imply the camera rolling ahead. His directing has the limp placidity of TV costume drama.

Gwyneth Paltrow plays Emma. I can't share either McGrath's estimate of her powers nor the huzzahs that have greeted his choice. Paltrow shows only modest range, modest depth, both of them always just evading a flatness that keeps threatening her. She has the freshness of her youth and of her relative novelty on the screen, but she never clearly certifies why we should be watching her in the role instead of some other actress. (I've seen a comparison of Paltrow with Meryl Streep, which could be taken as one more sign of the collapse of culture if it were anything more than publicity mouthing. My own comparison would be with Bridget Fonda.) If the role of Emma is to succeed, we must get from her something more than acknowledgement of mistakes in marital advice: there must be some conviction of growth. But Paltrow's Emma is nothing more than a busybody who gets her comeuppance.

The one evocative performance is of Mr. Knightley by Jeremy Northam, magnetic and complex. The silly Miss Bates is done vividly, just this side of cartoon, by Emma Thompson's sister Sophie, and her deaf mother is played by her own mother Phyllida Law, who has a good time being a dummy. Toni Colette, as the ductile Harriet Smith, seems a bit mature for someone who would let herself be maneuvered by Emma.

At the last, *Emma* leaves us with much the same thematic nub as the much more successful *Sense and Sensibility*. Laud Austen's structure as it deserves, her acuteness about character, her wit; still, ultimately this is a story of young women whose sole serious occupation is finding agreeable husbands with money. Was Austen subtly castigating a society that so narrowed a woman's existence? In the late twentieth century we have to hope so: because without believing it, these novels seem pathetic, enraging and just a touch disgusting. •

Robert Brustein on Theater

Subsidized Separatism

As the keynote address of the TCG (Theater Communications Group) Conference in late June, the African American playwright August Wilson gave a speech which was greeted with a standing ovation by the various resident theater people attending, though some found it divisive and disturbing. I was not present at this gathering, but word leaked back that chief among the malefactors identified in Wilson's broadside—his "snipers" and "naysayers" and "cultural imperialists"—was myself. TCG kindly provided me with a transcript of Wilson's remarks, titled "The Ground on Which I Stand."

Wilson's rambling jeremiad is essentially an effort to accentuate the achievements of black theater, which he claims to be supreme today though "often accomplished amid adverse and hostile conditions." "Black theater is alive, it is vibrant, it is vital," he says. But not all its practitioners are worthy of praise. In the same speech, Wilson manages to express his disdain for black "crossover artists that [like house slaves entertaining the white

"...sharp, elegant, morally insistent."*

T. S. Eliot, Anti-Semitism and Literary Form

Anthony Julius

"Julius...turns out to be a relentless prosecutor, a deep-digging scholar and a powerful literary critic."
—**Jack Kroll,** *Newsweek*

"...a painstakingly researched and fiercely argued volume... Julius has forced us to rethink some of our most fundamental, received ideas about art, ideas that for years protected Eliot from the sort of scrutiny found in these pages...He has written an important—and long overdue—book."
—**Michiko Kakutani,**
The New York Times

"Julius's argument about the poems in Ara Vos Prec *seems to me unassailable: they are poetry and they are anti-Semitic... His claim that anti-Semitism casts a shadow on Eliot's writing after 1922 is right as well. And in the end, even his refusal to concede grounds to exculpatory arguments seems just. For indifference is not defense."*
—**Louis Menand,**
The New York Review of Books

* *The New Yorker*

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master and his guests] slant their material for white consumption." He rebukes white foundations for failing to create and to subsidize black theater companies. And he characterizes the idea of "color-blind casting" as "a tool of the Cultural Imperialists"—"the same idea of assimilation that black Americans have been rejecting for the past 300 years."

If you hear echoes of 1960s radicalism, particularly the language of black nationalism, your ears are not deceiving you. And Wilson is hardly reluctant to admit his militant inheritance. Testifying that the black power movement was "the kiln in which I was fired," he proclaims that its concern with "self-determination, self-respect and self-defense" are the values that govern his life. He claims that "I am what is known, at least among the followers and supporters of Marcus Garvey, as a 'race man.'" He announces that the ground on which he stands was pioneered "by Nat Turner, by Denmark Vesey, by Martin Delaney, Marcus Garvey and the Honorable Elijah Muhammad"—rebels or separatists all, some of them proponents of a return to Africa. Conspicuous by its absence is the name of Martin Luther King Jr., among many other honored black Americans for whom the idea of integration is not anathema.

The foundation of Wilson's long tirade is his insistence on black culture, particularly black theater, not only as a unparalleled achievement but also as a singular and discrete experience of life. It is an experience that cannot be fully absorbed or understood by white people, much less criticized by them: "We cannot allow others to have authority over our cultural and spiritual products. We need to develop guidelines for the protection of our cultural property, our contributions and the influence they accrue." Whites and blacks can occupy the same country, but they cannot occupy the same ground. "Where is the common ground in the horrifics of lynching? Where is the common ground in the policeman's bullet? Where is the common ground in the hull or the deck of a slave ship...?" He describes "black conduct and manners as part of a system that is fueled by its own philosophy, mythology, history, creative motif, social organization and ethos." He deplores the presence of a black actor in a non-black play, standing on the stage "as part of a social milieu that has denied him his gods, his humanity, his mores, his ideas of himself and the world he lives in...." Indeed, he considers the very idea of an all-black production of *Death of a Salesman* "an assault on our presence ... an insult to our intelligence."

This is the language of self-segregation. At times, it is true, Wilson is willing to concede that blacks and whites breathe the same air and partake of certain "commonalities" of culture. Among these "commonalities" he includes food, though even that admission is weirdly exclusionary. Black people have been forced to be satisfied with the leavings of the pig. Yet blacks and whites "share a common experience with the pig as opposed to say Muslims and Jews, who do not share that experience." (Black Muslims? Reform Jews?) It is also true that, in the rolling cadences that bring his speech to its climax, Wilson admits the American theater's power to "inform about the human condition, its power to heal, its power to hold the mirror as 'twere up to nature, its power to uncover the truths we wrestle from uncertain and sometimes unyielding realities." And even this boilerplate rhetoric, for all its afterthought references to the unifying nature of the theater, fails to compensate for the divisive nature of his remarks. Perhaps some future student of syntax will analyze how Wilson's vacillating use of the word "we" in the same paragraph (first inclusively—"we have to do it together"—then exclusively—"we are brave and we are boisterous") betrays his ambivalent sense of American identity. This ambivalence makes for some confusing assertions. "We are black and beautiful.... We are not separatists.... We are Africans. We are Americans."

Moreover, Wilson's insistence on the strength and the uniqueness of a proud black culture is oddly inconsistent with his notion that blacks are "victims of the counting houses who hold from us ways to develop and support our talents." This inconsistency grows more glaring when Wilson directs his biblical fury toward some of these "counting houses" (that is, the funding agencies) and concludes that "the economics are reserved as privilege to the overwhelming abundance of institutions that promote and perpetrate white culture." He notes that of the sixty-six theaters in the League of Resident Theaters (LORT) only one can be considered black. And in an impassioned if curious appeal for subsidized separatism, he sees no contradiction in demanding that white foundations take the responsibility for founding as well as funding black theaters, as if theater companies were the creation of philanthropic agencies rather than the indigenous outgrowths of dedicated artists and supportive communities.

I'm not at all sure anymore what constitutes a "black" or "white" theater. Both the now defunct Negro Ensemble Company and the thriving Crossroads Theater fit Wilson's exclusive definition clearly enough. But how does one describe the New York Public Theater, and the Atlanta Alliance Theater, under the black artists George C. Wolfe and Kenneth Leon? Or the Yale Repertory Theatre and Syracuse Stage when they were led by such black directors as Lloyd Richards and Tazewell Thompson? Most American theaters today, like many American cities—like many Americans—are racially mixed. Are black actors now to play only black parts written by black playwrights? Will James Earl Jones no longer be permitted to play Judge Brack or Darth Vader? Must we exclude Andre Braugher and Denzel Washington from performing the Shakespearean monarchs? Is Othello no longer to be an acceptable opportunity for Morgan Freeman or Lawrence Fishburne? Will Athol Fugard be told he cannot take a colored role in his own plays? Must history be rolled back to the days of segregated theaters?

I fear Wilson is displaying a failure of memory—I hesitate to say a failure of gratitude—when he charges non-profit resident theaters with using "sociological criteria" in choosing seasons that "traditionally exclude blacks." All of his own plays were originated and produced by a large consortium of mainstream institutions, including the Yale Repertory Theatre, the Huntington, the Goodman, the Mark Taper, and so on. Wilson's pervasive tone of victimization, in fact, is oddly inappropriate for a playwright whose six LORT-generated plays, after completing the resident theater circuit, all found their way to Broadway, where they won two Pulitzer Prizes, five New York Drama Critics Circle awards, and I don't know how many Tonys, besides generating enormous box office income for the playwright (from white and black audiences alike).

Is a man who has garnered such extraordinary media attention—not to mention every conceivable playwriting fellowship—really in a position to say that blacks are being excluded from the American theater or that these institutions only "preserve, promote, and perpetuate white culture?" Has he read any Foundation reports lately? Does he have any idea of the proportion of grants, both public and private, that are exclusively reserved for inner-city audience development and multicultural activities in resident theaters?

I am the only villain identified by name in Wilson's speech. He makes reference to my article "Diversity and Unity" (which he incorrectly calls "Unity from Diversity"), but there are also hidden allusions to what I wrote in "The Options of Multiculturalism" and my unfavorable review of his play *The Piano Lesson*, all of which appeared in these pages, and to my *Times* op-ed piece on coercive foundation funding. Wilson specifically attacks my "surprisingly sophomoric assumption" that the present funding climate is character-

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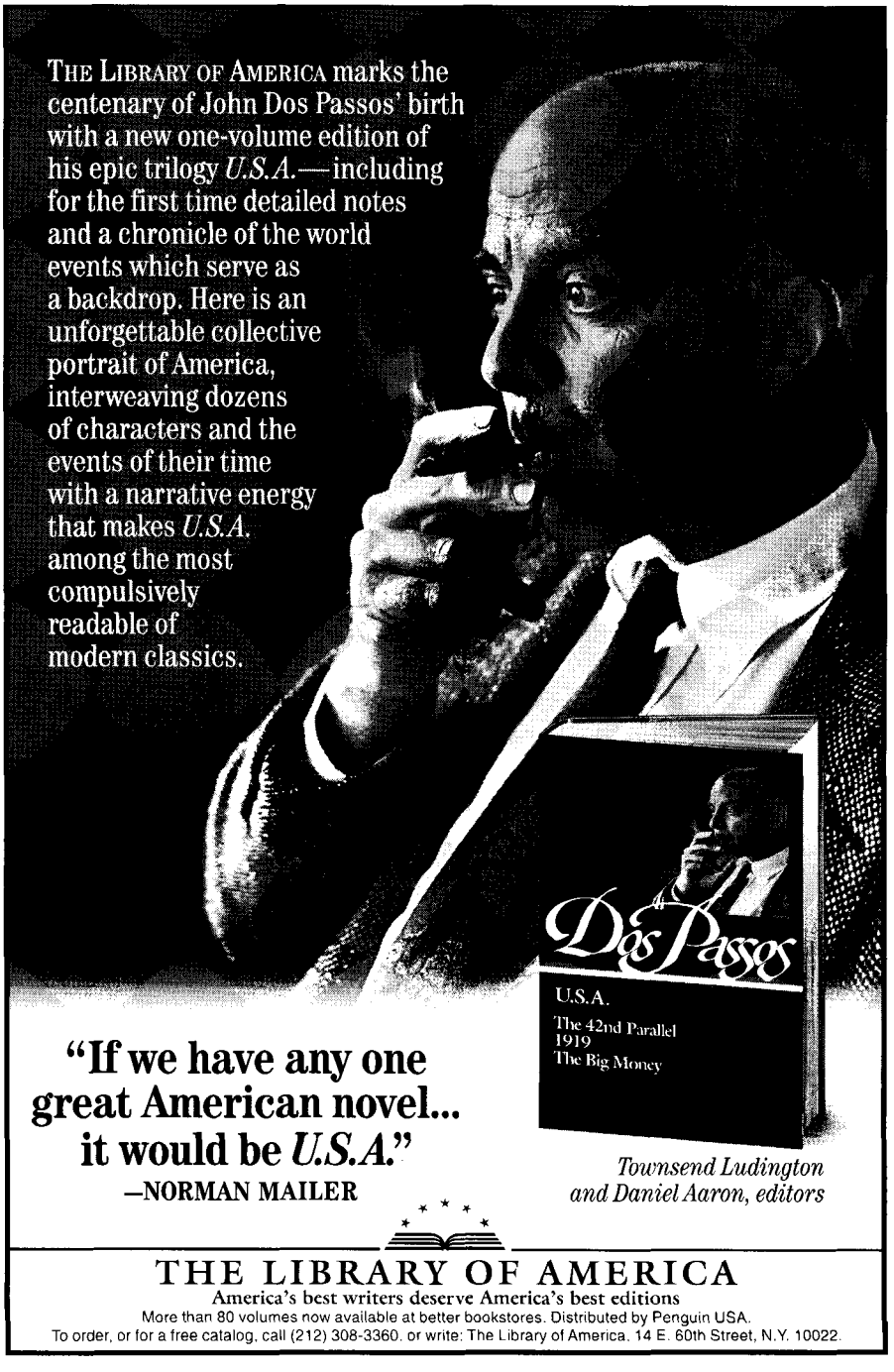
ized by confused standards and sociological rather than aesthetic criteria. I confess to believing that most foundations (by their own admission) no longer make artistic quality their primary consideration. But I categorically deny I ever said that "the practice of extending invitations to a national banquet from which a lot of hungry people have been excluded" (my phrase, uncredited) establishes (his phrase) "a presumption of inferiority of the work of minority artists."

Wilson's charge, with its nasty imputations of racism, is intended to characterize a review of two minority playwrights who, in my estimation, met the highest standards, and without being exclusionary. "Drenched in their own cultural juices," I wrote, "they are nevertheless capable of telling stories that include us all, thus proving again that the theater works best as a unifying rather than a segregating medium." I was talking about transcendence, about recognizing that the greatest art embraces a common humanity. Although Wilson might dismiss such playwrights—the younger generation of black writers such as Anna Deavere Smith and OyamO and Suzan-Lori Parks—as "crossover artists" entertaining the slave owner and his guests, my article was a plea to minority playwrights to acknowledge, without any loss of racial consciousness, that they belong, as artists, to the same human family as everyone else.

My readers may remember that, almost alone among white critics, I have expressed some reservations about Wilson's plays. This was an aesthetic judgment, not a racial judgment. While I admire Wilson's control of character and dialogue, a lot of his writing has seemed to me weakly structured, badly edited, prosaic and overwritten. Consider, for instance, his play *Seven Guitars*, which I didn't review. (I left after four guitars.) I don't think it demonstrates "the values of white Americans based on their European ancestors" to believe that a conventionally realistic play needs an animating event, and that, however colorful its subject matter, it cannot ramble willy-nilly for two-and-a-half hours before establishing a line of action. My less technical objection has been that, by choosing to chronicle the oppression of black people through each of the decades, Wilson has fallen into a monotonous tone of victimization, which is also the leitmotif of his TCG speech.

I am also disturbed by other attitudes reflected in that speech, notably that only black experience accounts for the work of black artists. In "The Options of Multiculturalism," I suggested that, while Wilson has announced he will never allow a white director to stage his plays, a backyard drama like *Fences* reveals the considerable influence of white playwrights, particularly Arthur Miller's *All My Sons*. (It may be that Wilson's anger over this conjecture ricochets into his ferocious attack on *The New York Times* for allegedly underplaying the influence of black singers on Michael Bolton—something he calls an "intent to maim.")

It is perfectly possible that I am wrong in my assessments. And I can understand how a playwright, no matter how highly praised by mainstream critics, can smart under adverse criticism, even in a relatively small circulation periodical such as THE NEW REPUBLIC. It is also no doubt painful to him that *Seven Guitars* lost the Tony this year to *Master Class*. But that is no justification for wheeling out the creaky juggernaut of Black Power to roll over any critic who makes a negative judgment on his plays. Indeed, Wilson seems to suggest occasionally that the only true critical function is boosterism. For at the same time that Wilson is questioning the very idea of critical opinions ("The true critic does not sit in judgment ... the critic has an important responsibility to guide and encourage ... growth"), he is announcing that every African American, contrary to Du Bois's idea of "the talented tenth," is artistically gifted: "All God's children got talent." This is progressive school nonsense. The greatest tribute that a critic can pay to a playwright such as Wilson is to analyze his work by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the same criteria as anybody else's work.

Wilson writes: "I stand myself and my art squarely on the self-defining ground of the slave quarters." Isn't it time to acknowledge that, for all the grim uncompleted racial business in this country, those quarters have long been razed to the ground? Isn't there some kind of statute of limitations on white guilt and white reparations? Isn't it possible to recognize that there is a difference between losing your freedom and losing a Tony, between toting a barge and carrying around an unfavorable review? To say that whites can't understand black culture because their ancestors were not enslaved is almost as problematical as saying that Wilson can't understand the writings of a Jew because he hasn't experienced life under Pharaoh. Many brilliant black artists and intellectuals—Albert Murray, Ralph Ellison, Henry Louis Gates Jr., Shelby Steele, and others—have repudiated the "ethnographic fallacy" that one writer's peculiar experiences can represent a whole social category. This tribalist approach, as Diane Ravitch has written, "confuses race with culture, as though everyone with the same skin color had the same culture and history."

August Wilson is more comfortable writing plays than apostolic decrees. His speech is melancholy testimony to the rabid identity politics and the poisonous racial consciousness that have been infecting our country in recent years. Although Wilson would deny it, such sentiments represent a reverse form of the old politics of division, an appeal for socially approved and foundation-funded separatism. I don't think Martin Luther King ever imagined an America where playwrights such as August Wilson would be demanding, under the pretense of calling for healing and unity, an entirely separate stage for black theater artists. What next? Separate schools? Separate washrooms? Separate drinking fountains? •

After the Revolutions

By Michael Ignatieff

A Tale of Two Utopias: The Political Journey of the Generation of 1968 by Paul Berman

(W.W. Norton, 351 pp., $24)

Paul Berman is writing the intellectual history of the radical generation whose leading figures—Tom Hayden in America, Guevara Niebla in Mexico, Daniel Cohn-Bendit in France, Rudi Dutschke in Germany, Václav Havel in Czechoslovakia—made the revolutions of 1968. Berman wants to understand why the same contagion of revolt swept through so many different societies at the same moment. His answer is that the contagion was carried by people with the same family profile. They were the sons and daughters of Trotskyist, Communist or socialist parents, and they all suffered from an "illegitimacy complex," a sense of guilt engendered by the contrast between their relative ease and affluence and the sufferings, political and otherwise, of their parents' generation in the Depression, the Holocaust and the McCarthyite atmosphere of the early cold war. Régis Debray is reported to have said of his own generation that "after the veterans of Verdun, of Mauthausen [the Nazi death camp] and of Indochina, we will be the veterans of the cinemathèque." How characteristic it was of the confused envies of the postwar generation to construe incarceration in a death camp as an enriching experience!

In order to overcome this debilitating sense of existential inauthenticity, the postwar radicals invented an existentialist ethic of their own. In Berman's pithy formulation, "They said, in effect: I struggle on behalf of others, therefore I am." Solidarity with faraway objects—the teeming but nebulous Third World, the equally nebulous proletariat closer to home—was supposed to confer genuine self-worth. But faraway causes were not enough. Existence could only be justified, finally, if the battle was brought home, if the existence of the fathers and the mothers—and with their hard political experience—was negated, too.

The radicals kicked over their parents' Communist traces in the name of a diffuse ideology of liberation organized around the concept of "participatory democracy." As Berman remarks, participatory democracy was free of the menace that once attached to the dictatorship of the proletariat. It was the kind of phrase, in other words, "you could shake with both hands and no exclamation point would come tumbling out." The earnest aspirations behind participatory democracy inspired an explosion of popular politics. Everything from community organizing to mass demonstrations sprang from this fervor for the emancipating virtues of activism.

Berman's genealogy of '68 is lively and fascinating, but it is selective. He places too much emphasis on the "red diaper" babies and not enough on the disillusioned children of Stevenson liberals. For '68 was a moment of reckoning in not just socialist households, but in liberal ones as well. He observes that these were mostly Jewish households; and this opens up the complex issue of how far '68 was a rebellion not only against the parents' politics, but also against their (usually) assimilated Jewishness. Berman raises this tantalizing issue, but he does not really follow through on it. Bob Dylan was not the only figure of his generation who passed through radicalism back into Judaism (and then back out again), as if discovering the essential futility of any politics which attempts to deny or to transcend inherited identities. Berman leaves us wondering how many other Jewish radicals made the same discovery after the heady disavowals of origins which characterized the '60s.

What is best about Berman's approach—apart from his relaxed, engaging and stylish writing—is that he is delightfully free of the Americano-centrism which dogs so many accounts of '68. Only in America could students have chanted, as they did in Grant Park, Chicago, "The whole world is watching." The whole world was not watching: it had its own revolutions, and Berman is unfailingly lucid about the hidden connections—biographical and ideological—which tied the revolutions in Mexico City, San Francisco, Chicago, London, Paris, Prague and Budapest together.

He makes a central claim that left me puzzled. Everyone thinks that by the early '70s the idea of "participatory democracy" was dead. Wrong, says Berman. 1968 went underground, and its best idea, participatory democracy, returned in triumph in 1989. The Berman thesis is that the student revolutions in 1968 prepared, and were ultimately vindicated by, the liberal democratic overthrow of Communism in 1989. This is an intriguing and very counterintuitive thought. For a start, '68 was wildly, incoherently anti-capitalist, while '89 was ideologically and morally procapitalist. In '89, markets were seen—rightly or wrongly—as an essential precondition of a free civil society and a

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democratic politics. Moreover, '89 was disciplined and '68 was all over the place. '89 was about political freedom; '68 was about sex, drugs and rock and roll. (Oh yes, and a war in Indochina.) Berman makes much of Havel's contact with Frank Zappa, but it is hard to imagine that the philosophical politician actually learned much from the hirsuted provocateur.

But the most significant difference of all was this: '89 was a liberal revolution, but "participatory democracy" was an explicitly anti-liberal idea. "Participatory democracy" was fuzzy enough, but it was very clearly against politics as usual, which the Marxists of the era jeeringly referred to as parliamentary cretinism and the narrow horizon of the bourgeois right. And this was precisely the horizon toward which Havel, Michnik and the other heroes of '89 resolutely led their civilian troops.

Berman's argument—that the radicals of '68 became the liberals of '89—is missing a key part of the story: the untold history of the liberal renaissance between 1968 and 1989. "Liberalism" has become such a term of abuse in America that it is sometimes difficult to notice, State-side, that liberalism has enjoyed an extraordinary intellectual revival, even in America, beginning with the Rawlsian revolution in the liberal theory of justice. In Europe, liberalism has waxed as social democracy (and then free market conservatism) has waned. The Helsinki process of the late '70s brought the human rights revolution to Eastern Europe, and since then the liberal notion of human rights has replaced socialism and Marxism as the guiding intellectual matrix behind the fight against dictatorship and political repression from Moscow to Buenos Aires. None of this figures in Berman's account of how '68 radicalism turned into '89 liberalism, but it should.

The other crucial element of the story, missing in Berman's otherwise compelling account, is what happened to American liberalism from Stevenson's second campaign in 1956 to the Vietnam War in 1965. For being a liberal was still a badge of honor when Kennedy took over the White House. The hard knights of Camelot were disdainful of the bow-tied decencies of the Stevenson crowd, but liberalism retained its prestige right through the heroic period of the civil rights movement. It was after Selma that black and white liberalism began to split apart, when King tried to take the struggle into the northern cities. At about the same time, Americans debarked at Danang and liberals faced a choice between their instinctual

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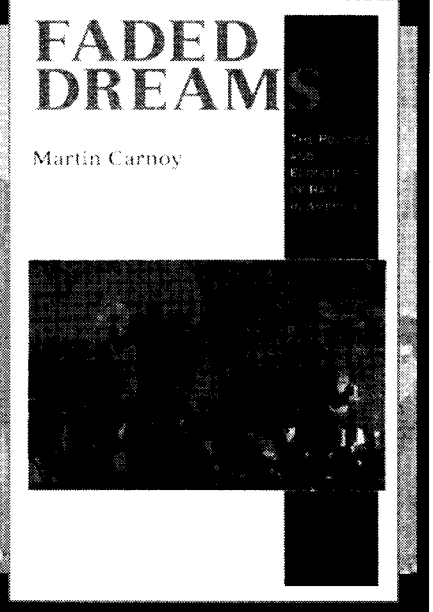

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anti-Communism and their equally instinctual support for anti-colonialist struggles.

While liberals anguished over race and Vietnam, the "red diaper" generation looked on with the scorn that they had inherited from their socialist parents. This was the moment—late 1965, early 1966—when liberalism became a term of abuse on campus. In the first instance, the abuse came from the left. When, in the '70s, the conservatives began running against the '60s, as they have done without interruption ever since, their condemnations of "permissiveness" lumped together liberals and radicals who were actually sworn enemies. For my taste, the Berman thesis—which regards '60s radicalism as a waystage on the road to '90s liberalism—fails to remember just how viscerally red diaper radicals like him loathed liberals like me. Nor does he explain how a once-strong American liberal tradition left the '60s permanently enfeebled by its association with a permissiveness about which it was as dubious as any conservative.

Unfortunately, much of the best in the American liberal conscience abandoned the public area for the academy. Rawls's *A Theory of Justice* and the subsequent and extraordinary revival of liberal political theory remained a university phenomenon, with much less purchase on the world of American politics than its own practitioners would have liked. In many ways, the last advocates of participatory democracy are now the tenured communitarians of the political philosophy guild.

Berman's account of the '60s revolution in Europe also neglects the hidden history of liberalism in this period. The trio of liberal saints—Karl Popper, Isaiah Berlin and Raymond Aron—found it hard to get a hearing in the '60s. All had published their calls to arms by the late '50s; all stood for a skeptical rationalism, a visceral anti-Communism and a championing of what Berlin called "negative liberty": the idea that there should be strict limits on the coercive power of the state, that liberty is only liberty if people are left entirely free to do what they want with it. These doctrines were anathema to many radicals of the '60s. "Participatory democracy" was explicitly framed against the idea of "negative liberty." Participation implied that liberty should be positive rather than negative; that people should become active citizens and take over their factories and their universities. Only then would they be free. Liberal skeptics such as Berlin did point out to their students that some people might not care to use their liberty in this way: participation was in conflict with privacy, and it was an infringement of liberty itself to prefer one value over the other. Besides, said the defenders of negative liberty, most ordinary people did not rate political participation very highly at all.

Defenders of "participatory democracy" got around the evidence of ordinary people's political quietism with the old argument from "false consciousness." People would participate if they knew what was good for them, but they didn't, because they lived in the alienating isolation of a modern capitalist division of labor. Nothing aroused the moral indignation of liberals such as Berlin or Popper more than this argument. They tartly pointed out exactly where it led: to the proposition that people might have to be compelled to be free before they could be brought to value participation for its own sake. Many of the most philosophically gifted advocates of "participatory democracy," figures such as Charles Taylor or Steven Lukes, explicitly refused to take this next step. They turned out to be liberals at heart, in that they didn't want to compel people to be free.

But tough-minded brethren with Trotskyite, socialist or Communist predilections were less scrupulous. In their hands, "participatory democracy" became an essentially illiberal slogan, which quickly degenerated into a justification of Leninist "vanguardism." If the masses wouldn't follow the vanguard, then the vanguard would cease to derive its legitimacy from what the masses actually said they wanted; the vanguard would seize power and act in the masses' name. Only this time, of course, Leninism returned not even as tragedy, but as bloody farce: in the Black Panthers, the Symbionese Liberation Army, the Weathermen.

From the debacle of Western radicalism there was *nothing* for Eastern Europe to learn. They already knew where Leninism led. Certainly, there was a brief moment when students in East and West jointly entertained that oxymoronic illusion: socialism with a human face. Once the tanks rolled into Prague in August '68, however, socialism's true face stood revealed, and, with few exceptions, Eastern Europe never dreamed that dream again. But the dream lingered on among Western *enragés*, who fell for the Maoist delusion that socialism could become human only if its believers waged continuous revolution on bureaucracy, technocracy and other ill-defined targets of their nihilist rage.

While Parisians such as André Glucksmann were still trying to make Maoism intellectually respectable, Prague, Budapest and (increasingly) Belgrade were trying to disinfest themselves of the socialist delusion altogether. By the early '70s, they were turning to the liberal saints whom the Western students had ignored, especially to Popper, whose "open society" defined the horizon toward which they were struggling. At a time when Western socialists and social democrats were still struggling to accept the proposition that markets might be a precondition for liberty, the Eastern European intellectuals had convinced themselves that Hayek (and Thatcher) had been right all along. And just as important as these liberal and conservative importations from abroad were the entirely homegrown inspirations, in Poland and Czechoslovakia's intellectual renaissance in the 1980s: John Paul II in Poland and Jan Patočka's philosophy in Czechoslovakia.

It was only in the mid-'70s, years after the Prague August that destroyed the Prague spring, that Western European radicals had their final moment of reckoning with the Communist inheritance. As Berman recounts, Parisian intellectuals disintoxicated themselves of Maoism, by means of exposure to Solzhenitsyn's *The Gulag Archipelago*. Berman gives a lucid account of how a largely Jewish intelligentsia, many issuing from families with a dolefully personal acquaintance with the Holocaust, woke up to the fact that they had been colluding with an exterminatory ideology of their own. This awakening was peculiar, since it was so belated. Camus, Aron, even Gide had "awakened" decades earlier. Why, Berman might have asked, did the sons take so long to wake up to crimes which were common knowledge to their fathers? Glucksmann, after all, was one of Aron's students. But he was unable to listen.

The history of Berman's generation is the history of that deafness, the inability of a radicalism struggling to emancipate itself from Communism to listen and learn from liberalism until it was too late. Berman writes as if radicalism and liberalism are just extreme and moderate versions of the same good idea: that men and women should be citizens. But radicalism and liberalism belong to different historical families and to different moralities. Radicalism chooses justice over liberty, liberalism chooses liberty over justice. A liberal refuses to believe that there is an answer to the question of how each of us should live. A radical believes in radiant tomorrows. Between these two traditions, the gulf is impassable. Radicalism did not mutate into liberalism: it died in embarrassment, incoherence and ignominy. Berman's book

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is a marvelously wry, entertaining and intelligent defense of the conviction and the courage of the red diaper babies. I just wish that he had not finessed the distinction between radicalism and liberalism; and that he had devoted more thought to liberalism's strange revival. A great deal, in the world of ideas and in the world of people, depends on it.

MICHAEL IGNATIEFF is writing a biography of Isaiah Berlin.

The Stuff of Faith

BY PAUL ELIE

Material Christianity: Religion and Popular Culture in America by Colleen McDannell

(Yale University Press, 312 pp., $35)

Icons of American Protestantism: The Art of Warner Sallman Edited by David Morgan

(Yale University Press, 247 pp., $35)

When the spirit moves me but I am loath to darken the doors of a church, I go to Fort Tryon Park, there to commune with what Colleen McDannell calls "the material manifestations of religion." At the northern tip of the park is the Cloisters, the Metropolitan Museum's branch for medieval art, a gift of John D. Rockefeller Jr., who in the 1930s paid millions of dollars to have five vintage European cloisters taken apart, shipped across the Atlantic and cobbled together again in upper Manhattan. There the Christian religion seems intricate and temperate, the sunlight dawdling through fourteenth-century Austrian stained glass, an early music group playing madrigals in the Fuentaduena Chapel, the cross of Bury St. Edmunds aglow in its bulletproof case.

Mother Cabrini's remains lie in plain view at the other end of the park, in the chapel of a school with all the charm of a post office. Frances Xavier Cabrini, an immigrant from Italy who founded schools and orphanages and hospitals and a religious order, was the first American citizen to be canonized, in 1946. Her head was cut off and sent to Rome decades ago and replaced with a wax one, but the rest of her is still there, shrunken and blackened, inside a coffiny glass altar. There is a plaster statue of her in the next room (somebody has stuck a dollar bill in the palm) and a case downstairs full of jewelry and bric-a-brac left by devotees in gratitude for the miracles that Mother Cabrini worked for them.

Visiting the Cloisters and the shrine to Mother Cabrini on a Sunday afternoon is like overhearing an argument about the nature of Christianity in this country—an exchange between the party of propriety and the party of piety, between the storied European past and the brash American present. The one is respectable, edifying, a rock of ages; the other is ecstatic, tacky, frankly supernatural, a stone longing to be turned into bread. Up here is the religion of the commercial elite, old money earning interest for the right philanthropies; down there is the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen, the faith of the striving masses.

Or so it seems. The relation of Christianity to the world of things is more complicated than that—more "scrambled," as McDannell puts it in her book. The sacred and the profane, the clergy and the laity, the elite and the masses: all these categories prove, under pressure, to be as spongy and comfortless as the kneelers in a hospital chapel. The supposedly "popular" devotion to Mother Cabrini, for example, has been spearheaded by priests and nuns, by what McDannell calls a "clerical elite"; the schools and the hospitals founded by the saint are now bulwarks of the "institutional church." And the Rockefellers? They were the world's wealthiest Baptists, but they were lay people, not clergy, and the neo-Christian edifices that they created in the Cloisters and on the University of Chicago campus can be seen as expressions of a syncretic people's religion no less genuine than a *santeria* ritual in the South Bronx.

In *Material Christianity*, Colleen McDannell, the co-author of a book about the history of the idea of heaven, tries to reckon with the ways American Christians have related to the "material culture" of their religion. Through a series of "case studies," she examines the cultural significance of turn-of-the-century parlor Bibles, Mormon priesthood garments, holy water imported from Lourdes, the gravestones and landscaping of Laurel Hill Cemetery near Philadelphia, T-shirts and bumper stickers from the 1970s "Jesus movement," and the ubiquitous depictions of Jesus by the evangelical artist Warner Sallman. Along the way she remarks on enough Christian stuff to fill a tag sale in Bay Ridge: rosaries and scapulars, home altars and embroidered samplers, "Little Nun" and "Little Priest" costumes, "University of Heaven" sweatshirts and "Jesus: He's the real thing" baseball caps.

This oversize, illustrated book carries endorsements from prominent scholars of American Protestant, Catholic and Jewish history, and McDannell acknowledges the support of research institutes at Louisville Presbyterian Seminary and the University of Notre Dame. That information places the book right in the middle of current discussions about American Christianity, where the interpretive communities that are the universities abut the interpretive communities that are the churches. Even as McDannell makes her points for like-minded scholars and invites readers to guess her religious background, she is sponsored by the churches, which in effect have invited her to explain them to themselves.

Alas, she fails to do so. Her argument is as scrambled as her subject. And her failure is revealing: first, because she is prone to the same grasping revisionism and interpretive mixing and matching found in the churches themselves, as they try to retell their story in ways that will at once atone for their past sins and sharpen their prophetic edge; and second, because she has visited "cultural studies" upon the study of faith, and so provided a fine example of the damage to understanding that ensues.

McDannell has a dual appointment in history and religious studies at the University of Utah, and her approach owes something to scholars of American culture such as Ann Douglas (whose analysis of the role of the piano in the middle-class home, a set piece of *Terrible Honesty*, is echoed here) and something to historians of religion such as Jon Butler (whose rejection of the "Puritan model" of religious historiography she takes as

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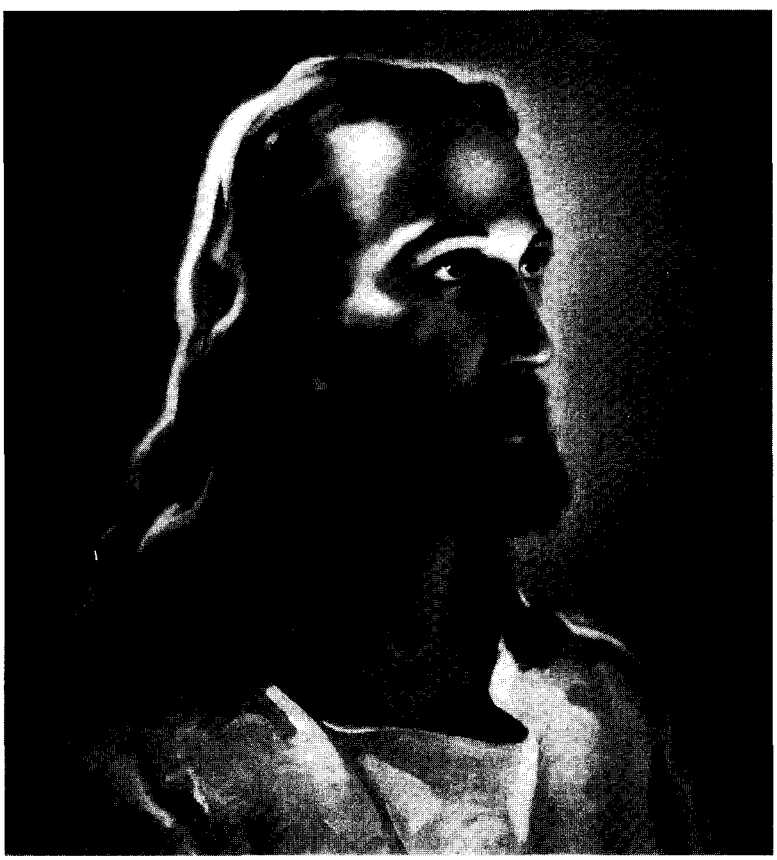
her starting point). Her most pronounced debt, however, is to "cultural studies" and "material culture studies," whose notions about how to interpret culture "from below" she trumpets with the zeal of a convert.

"American Christians ... want to see, hear, and touch God," McDannell announces. "Religion is more than a type of knowledge learned through reading holy books and listening to holy men.... Throughout American history, Christians have explored the meaning of the divine, the nature of death, the power of healing, and the experience of the body by interacting with a created world of images and shapes." McDannell states the obvious as though it is a revelation. The passage sounds deeply felt, and it properly honors the hunger for sensual experience that characterizes religious faith, which seeks the invisible in the visible; but the believer's need for the material expression of the divine is quickly reduced, in McDannell's handling of it, into a form of conspicuous consumption. Like Flannery O'Connor's Hazel Metes, she has blinded herself to the difference between the material expression of faith and its essentially unmaterial nature.

She regards the subject of "material Christianity" as more or less virgin territory, passed over by scholars of religion and scholars of American culture alike. Forget that the relation of the Christian faith to the material culture of the New World has been an American obsession since the time of the Pilgrims. (Remember Hawthorne? the Shakers? Mary Baker Eddy?) Forget the innumerable postwar novels and memoirs about Christianity, typically overstuffed with David-and-Goliath filmstrips at Baptist day camp and the cruets and altar wine at Our Lady of Perpetual Help. McDannell genuflects before this long and complex history, but her sense of the past is overwhelmed by her sense of the scholarly moment that is upon her. "Why has religious material culture been ignored in the study of American Christianity?" she asks. "What can this lacuna in scholarship tell us about the limited way we understand religion?"

As it happens, it tells us less about the way we understand religion than we might wish. In a windy prolegomenon to her book, McDannell offers reasons why most scholars of the Christian past have followed the "self-understanding" of the churches in paying too much attention to matters of faith and morals and not enough to "Book of Mormon" paper dolls and "God Loves You" bumper stickers. Most of her reasons are drawn from the boilerplate of cultural studies, whose premises directly challenge the metaphysical, transhistorical claims of the Christian tradition. For McDannell, revealed truth reveals only a cultural construct.



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WARNER SALLMAN, *HEAD OF CHRIST*, 1940

Two centuries after the Enlightenment, a century and a half after the German higher criticism, a century after Nietzsche and William James, it is hard to believe that the conflict between religion as revelation and religion as social construct is still being posed so starkly. But so it is. As McDannell sees it, Durkheim's dualism of the sacred and the profane (and the Western vice of "binary thinking" generally) has obscured the "mingling" of piety and commerce, of gospel faith and "Jesus junk." The old saw that Catholic devotion is made incarnate in things while Protestant piety is intent on the Word, she contends, has concealed the thingishness of Protestant culture and papered over the many points of contact between Protestant and Catholic religious practice. Popular piety has been seen as the turning of weak, semi-articulate people to objects in their need, rather than as the creative expressions of people making do with what is at hand.

Moreover, the prevailing "secularization model" of contemporary thought, which sees Christianity's influence as always and everywhere on the wane, leads cultural critics to riff gleefully on the "iconic" status of CB radios and Elvis photographs while overlooking the religious status of actual religious objects. Those objects are McDannell's own material; but she wants her reader to know that she does not consider religious objects religious in any essential way. "Material culture in itself has no intrinsic meaning of its own," she writes. "Objects or landscapes are understood and gain significance when their 'human' elements can be deciphered."

Enter "material culture specialists" such as herself, who "read" objects, "derive meanings" from them, and "place material culture in the society that produced it." By using the hermeneutics of suspicion—scrutinizing what Christians do, not what they say they do—the specialist can get behind the orthodoxies of church leaders and their academic counterparts. "We must find ways to make mute objects speak," McDannell writes. But by no means will she hear them speak the language of Christian faith, which has at its paradoxical center the divinity's entrance into the world of things. No: where the Christian tradition speaks of the Word made flesh, McDannell makes the flesh word, turning religious objects into blank slates on which she can inscribe her loopy theories about how culture is made. She does not see the universe in a grain of sand, but she sees the meanings deemed *au courant* by half a dozen revisionist movements in a teapot bearing the likeness of John Wesley. One can see in her presentation of the irresistible forces of fashion something like a Catholic sense of inspired history, minus the inspiration.

Such an approach may place the professor in the academic vanguard, but it

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puts her in an intellectual fix. McDannell vows to bring to light the unexamined religious practices of "average people," yet she pledges not to take those average people at their word as to how they understand a home altar or a *Head of Christ* print. She promises to cast a cold eye on official church ideas, but those ideas, more than she might like, are held by average people as well. Besides, many of the average people she is interested in are dead, and "people rarely preserve their feelings for posterity."

McDannell seems to think that all believers are iconoclasts, dogmatic simpletons who will be offended by the scholar's courageous suggestion that in expressing their faith through objects they express their cultural affinities as well. (All that offends the believers, of course, is the suggestion that their faith is *only* an expression of their culture.) McDannell is skeptical of just about all the forms of inquiry that would enable her to understand how American Christians have used and understood religious objects. So it is no surprise that her account of what Christians have made of their material culture is in large part an account of what she herself makes of it. Which is a shame, because the subject matter of *Material Christianity* emerges, almost in spite of the book's argument, as important and fascinating.

When McDannell focuses her attention and respects her source material—as in the chapters on Laurel Hill Cemetery and on the Lourdes holy water enterprise established at the University of Notre Dame—the result is solid historical recovery. Yet her guiding ideas are arbitrary and capricious. Her chapter called "Piety, Art, Fashion: The Religious Object" is offered as a demonstration of McDannell's method, as a clearing away of the conventional wisdom about religious objects. What it demonstrates, though, is what happens when a scholar is determined to put old wine into new wineskins, whatever the cost.

Having dismissed the idea of "intrinsic meaning" in religious objects, McDannell calls upon it in a moment of need, noting how a print by Warner Sallman suggests that Jesus is a personal savior "because of its own inherent qualities." Determined to banish shopworn ideas about differences between Catholics and Protestants, she invokes them as crudely as a jackleg preacher. ("But surely isn't it only Catholics who have spiritual relationships with religious prints or statues? . . . Don't Protestants realize that to make an object stand in for a subject is to come dangerously close to idolatry?") Discussing home altars, she breaks her vow not to belittle the religious experiences of "average people." (The altars fashioned by poor Mexican-American women give them "strength to cope," while those made by self-styled artists "communicate" their creative visions.) Meanwhile, she willfully ignores the historian's crucial distinction between the past and the present, remarking on the way in which Catholics "mount holy water fonts in each room" as though the sea change in American Catholic culture after Vatican II never happened.

McDannell's lapses in method are especially vexing because they contradict her stated aims. In her analysis of the uses made of Murillo's *Immaculate Conception*, for example, McDannell wants to demonstrate how the painting was "transformed from an object of devotion into a decoration" in the first half of this century, as American Christians, Catholic and Protestant, began to hang prints of it in their parlors rather than in a "sacred space" such as above a home altar. She writes: "While the subject of the print, the Virgin Mary, has religious associations"—so far, so good—"the print frequently was placed in a non-devotional context. Christians used it not to stimulate religious piety but to demonstrate fashionable taste or provide visual excitement." Her conclusion is that "at times, fashion overshadows faith."

Fashion no doubt had something to do with it, but there is more to the story.

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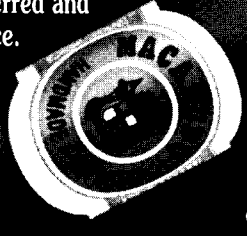

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For, as McDannell herself reports, prints of Murillo's image were first marketed for devotional use shortly after the painting was acquired by the Louvre in 1852, for what was then the highest price ever paid for a single painting. When the marketers began their work, in other words, the painting had already been recognized and enshrined as fine art. It seems likely that the whole story of the painting's place in the culture has to do with the way religious people persisted in recognizing the painting as fine art even as church leaders and religious goods dealers presented it to them as a devotional object. This story would suit McDannell's up-with-people project more than the one she tells, but she is reluctant to credit her average people with good taste when she can see them as a group in thrall to cultural forces.

McDannell's problems in making sense of religious objects are precisely the problems faced by the churches in America today—at least those faced by the liberal Protestant churches and the liberal wing of American Catholicism, which seek rapprochement between faith and a modern idea of progress. These churches, too, are eager to put old wine into new wineskins and startle their traditions back to life. They have tried every which way to throw new light on the ancient faith—liberation theologies, historical rewrites, self-help credos, the bells and whistles of popular culture—only to find that these approaches compete with or contradict each other.

While the left hand exposes formal religious leadership as a cultural construct, the right hand embraces Desmond Tutu and Helen Prejean as people who have got the spirit. Gender is dismissed as just a convention, but homosexuality is argued to be innate. The early church's rapprochement with the Roman Empire is seen as a deal with the devil, while the syncretistic Christianity of Africa and the *candomble* worship of Brazil are presented as examples of vital cultural adaptation which progressive Christians should wish to emulate. Contradictions abound, and in straightening them out church people can no longer simply appeal to precedent or authority, for the main thing the various revisionist movements share is an antipathy to tradition—an impulse, of course, that places them firmly in the tradition of American religion from the earliest settlers onward.

The resulting crisis of meaning in the American churches is owed not to an absence of meaning, but to a plenitude of meaning—to a riot of ideas that cannot be reconciled to one another without confusion and pain. And yet survey after survey reports that those people who are joining or rejoining the churches do so because they want their children to learn something about timeless truths, because they see the churches as places where fixed meanings still prevail.

In such a situation, religious objects historically have served as sites of stable meaning, as hitching posts for doctrines and practices prone to wander, and as binding forces for otherwise fractious peoples. Time and again, Christians have pressed material culture—objects, art, architecture—into the service of their ideal conceptions of Christianity. (This may be seen in a brief history of the scapular in McDannell's book.) In the churches, as the art historian Sally M. Promey observes in *Icons of American Protestantism: The Art of Warner Sallman*, questions of aesthetics have never been just questions of taste. They are questions about the substance of religious belief, the content of religious character.

Few Christians in America have understood this better than Warner Sallman and his associates at the Gospel Trumpet Company. Sallman created a famous *Head of Christ* and a stream of related images that, through reproductions on a dizzying array of religious goods, arguably became *the* twentieth-century popular image of Jesus. The contributors to *Icons of American Protestantism*—a theologian, an historian, two art historians, a professor of American studies and Colleen McDannell—see Sallman's work as a window onto twentieth-century debates on Christian aesthetics and conflicts in American Christianity generally; and their own essays are windows, some clear, others opaque, onto current work in the history of American religion.

Sallman's career recalls none so much as Andy Warhol's: a few signature images multiplied endlessly, a blend of abstract ideas and low visual media and an evangelical personality. Sallman was born in 1892 in a suburb of Chicago, into a family who belonged to the Swedish Evangelical Covenant Church, and, hearing a call early on to practice his faith through commercial art, he followed training at the Art Institute of Chicago with study at the Moody Bible Institute. In 1924, while he was working as a freelance illustrator, a looming cover deadline for his church's newsletter prompted the "vision" that changed his life. His account is uncannily similar to Martin Luther King Jr.'s account of the midnight vision that prompted him to lead the Montgomery bus boycott: "After an exhaustive and anxious six hours alone at my drawing board without satisfactory results, I retired at midnight ... within two sleepless hours, the glorious appearing shown [sic] about in the darkened room and instantly impressed on my mind that that is what I should do on the morrow. After the vision vanished, I went up to my studio and made a memory thumbnail sketch to help me make the charcoal drawing the next day in time for the engraver's deadline for the February issue...."

The image was his *Son of Man*, a three-quarters view charcoal portrait distinguished by the glow of light about the forehead and (to many viewers' eyes) its blond hair and Nordic features. In 1938 the Gospel Trumpet Company, a faltering religious goods concern, acquired rights to the image. Two years later Sallman came up with a color version. The *Head of Christ* was an instant best-seller, especially after World War II, during which the Salvation Army and the YMCA sent several million prints to soldiers overseas. One scholar cites an estimate that, by 1984, 500 million reproductions were in circulation.

Soon the Gospel Trumpet Company and its affiliates replaced most of the hoary lithographs in their catalog with shiny, happy color prints by Sallman. The *Head of Christ* "became the virtual trademark" (what a trademark!) of the company, which marketed it on greeting cards, night lights, "bookends, rustic 'art-wood' plaques, billfolds, calendars, Bibles and crosses" (not to mention the "Inspira-Clock" and the "Inspira-Lamp"). Promotional literature depicted Sallman as a "consecrated artist," an evangelist with a sketch pad, and he gave "chalk talks" in which he told the story of his vision while drawing a fresh *Head of Christ* right before his public's eyes—one that was virtually identical to the prints hanging on their parlor walls and tucked into their wallets.

The essays in *Icons of American Protestantism* exhaustively explore the influences on Sallman's work and the uses to which it has been put. (Sallman died in 1968.) His *Head of Christ* is shown to have been influenced by nineteenth-century German pious art, modern portrait photography and film stills. The *Head* performed miracles, witnessed acts of child abuse and put robbers to shame with its gaze. Mid-century neo-evangelicals enlisted Sallman's work as "the visual equivalent of verbal inerrancy" in the Bible, while Christians in advertising set out to make Christ, Sallman's Christ, "Protestantism's premier businessman." Some church leaders adopted the image as the standard-bearer of a freshly masculine Christianity, while others derided it as the epit-

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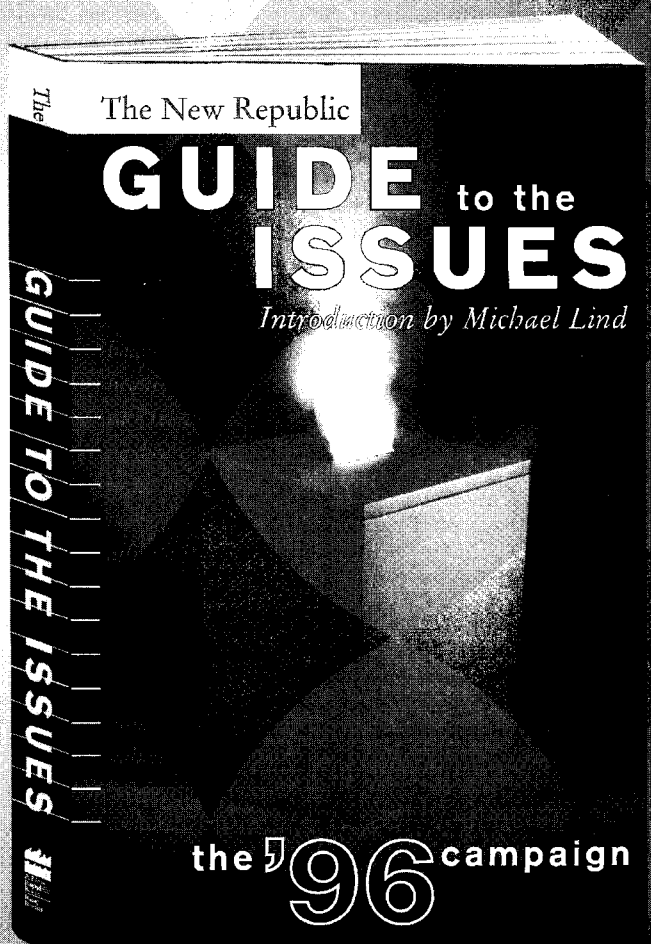

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ome of feminine, even effeminate piety. Few were left unmoved by it: in a survey conducted by the editor of the volume, 500 respondents tell what the *Head* has meant to them. ("This is a 'person' I want to know," says one; says another: "This is a Christ who would be aghast if you tied your shoes wrong.... Galilean fishermen and publicans would have given him a sound thrashing rather than following him.")

All of these scholars, like McDannell in her book, see the meanings of religious objects as culturally constructed, and the *Head of Christ* as a Rorschach blot of sorts for "the ideological expectation or psychological need of the viewer." Yet there is very little deciphering here. There hardly needs to be. For what the book reveals is how explicit Sallman and his supporters were about their efforts to use Christian images for particular ends. They wanted to make money, but chiefly they sought to sponsor a particular kind of Christian culture—popular, virile, versatile, up-to-date—by "making use of all modern devices to attract, competing, but in a more dignified manner, with those commercialized entertainments that are said to be keeping many away."

They stated their aims with Babbitt-like frankness. In drawing his *Son of Man*, Sallman followed a Moody instructor's advice to "Make Him a real man! Make Him rugged, not effeminate." Four decades later, after his *Head of Christ* was derided for its femininity, he drew a new, supposedly more manly portrait, instructing the printer not to make the hair too wavy or "feminine." He carefully obeyed biblical literalism ("no angels, no halos, no clouds"), prompting his admirers to claim that he had accurately depicted first-century Palestine. In all this he was seen to be making Christianity user-friendly for a generation raised on movies and discovering television.

Sallman's *Head of Christ* was a salvo in a culture war fought with a high degree of self-consciousness by American Protestants in the middle of this century. On the one side, neo-evangelicals enlisted Sallman's art as a statement of their opposition to abstract art as a Gnostic heresy whose practitioners, as one evangelical scholar wrote in 1958, "have despaired of this world, and at the expense of communicability ... have run to a mystic realm of the soul ... where conversation is limited to the coterie who have the esoteric gnosis." On the other side, liberal Protestants, led by Paul Tillich, saw abstract art as the very embodiment of the modern religious sensibility, shot through with the agonized authenticity they found lacking in everyday Protestant culture. "Modern art," Tillich proposed, "is not propaganda but revelation."

In a fascinating essay, Sally M. Promey suggests reasons why the liberal Protestant intelligentsia embraced such a proposition. In championing abstract art, liberal Protestants reinforced their class aspirations, stood apart from the evangelical rabble, sought points of contact with the secular culture and associated themselves with a movement that was just then making America the world center of modernism. And in the claims of Abstract Expressionism's chief exponent, Clement Greenberg, they heard strains of the scriptural theme of the "saving remnant," a minority who would keep the faith when the barbarians were at the gates. The liberal Christian leadership reached out to modern art with a vigor and seriousness that seem remarkable today. Advisers to the National Council of Churches—notably Alfred Barr, then the director of the Museum of Modern Art and a devout Presbyterian—issued a call for a "vanguard of men and women qualified to interpret the significance of contemporary art for the believer" and "build bridges" between liberal Protestantism and the secular modern culture. "The terms of the discourse," they proposed, "cannot be confined to the arts in any narrow sense but must involve the wider problems having to do with the symbols and values of our society and the vehicles of communication in our culture."

The rhetoric of that call is notably similar to Colleen McDannell's call, two generations later, for a vanguard of "material culture specialists" who can "decipher" Christian objects. The intentions, though, have been turned inside out. Today's specialists, fluent in secular modernity, are called not to find religious significance in modern culture, but to find significance in Christian practices otherwise regarded as untenable or embarrassing. Today it is the De Kooning painting that is familiar and the Christian past that is strange; and these scholars, rather than seeking ways to make that past familiar again, ratchet up its strangeness so as to invest it with mystery. Having set aside the pretension of redeeming the world, they want at least to save it from its own ordinariness.

It is disheartening to see the churches sponsor that task in the way they sponsored the building-up of a Christian material culture only half a century ago. For the notions of scholars like Colleen

All That Is Symmetric

I was thinking that I wanted symmetry, that
symmetry was possible, desirable, that I could come
to a conclusion and not (nonetheless) "leap to conclusions,"
as if your death were not after all (death, you) conclusion.

I was thinking in the back yard (snow, smoking)
about what you'd wanted. *If you don't know by now*
what I'd want you to write, says the ignorant moon,
the ugly chile, and stops. I was thinking of the mystery

of judge that you not be judged,
and then all about our trios together: "who'd
thought what when, known different sometime, learned
how to *make the best of it*."

I xeroxed your special picture for someone else,
I didn't see how I wanted it for myself.
What the picture was of, I know you'd have been amazed
that I wanted to see it, keep it. One fine day

in the Marina, or along the Embarcadero. A too large cap,
like Spanky's (no, not accurate); your father and mother; coats.
And straight at the camera the face that was you learning,
worried but learning, except with the deep-set eyes

open. I'd never seen it. Now I've kept it. I have been thinking
of you so often, and so often wanting to be so specific.
Too late; too soon. But we were always (young father, daughter,
then older) symmetric.

ELIZABETH MACKLIN

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McDannell are unlikely to be of much use to them. At this point the churches hardly need to be told that culture is constructed. They were founded, after all, on the realization that truth, such as it is, must be shaped and embodied and given voice by culture. For centuries they have understood the development of culture as a creative response to the revelation of God. What they need now is to follow their premises to their conclusions, to reckon with the profound change that occurred when the phrase "created things" came to denote only the handiwork of women and men and no longer God's creation.

PAUL ELIE is the editor of *A Tremor of Bliss: Contemporary Writers on the Saints* (Riverhead Books).

The Never-ending Story

BY WILLIAM H. PRITCHARD

A Dance to the Music of Time by Anthony Powell

(4 volumes, University of Chicago Press, Vols. I-III, $17.95 each; Vol. IV, $18.95)

The most heartening, if uncelebrated, literary event of recent months is the publication by the University of Chicago Press of Anthony Powell's masterwork, *A Dance to the Music of Time*, coinciding with Powell's 90th birthday. Each volume of three novels makes up one "movement" in the twelve-novel sequence. Each features on its cover a detail from Poussin's painting in the Wallace Collection, "A Dance to the Music of Time," with black-and-white reproduction of the painting inside the cover. The books are well-bound; their type is large and reader-friendly; they look as if they will be around for some time.

A Dance to the Music of Time began to unfold in 1951, when Powell published *A Question of Upbringing*, largely concerned with the life of the narrator, Nicholas Jenkins, at "school"—Eton and Oxford, though neither of them is named. The novel introduces us to a number of characters who will play significant or minor roles in the sequence to come, among them Nick's roommates, Peter Templer and Charles Stringham. Even as a young man, Templer is good with the ladies, not much with the books; Stringham, ironic and literary, is already detaching himself from conventional social expectations. We also meet figures who will surface later on, "characters" such as Nick's housemaster, the hellenizing Le Bas and his stock of bad Victorian verse; and Nick's relative, Uncle Giles, "a bit of a radical" (as he likes to think of himself) who always turns up at the wrong time. But the figure with whom—after a short prologue—the novel begins is that of Kenneth Widmerpool, another school acquaintance. Except for Nick himself, Widmerpool will play the most significant role in *Dance*, turning up in each successive volume, never less than substantially.

We are introduced to him on a bleak Saturday in December 1921 as, ahead of his time, he is taking "a run"—something he does voluntarily every afternoon—"in a sweater once white and cap at least a size too small, hobbling unevenly, though with determination, on the flat heels of spiked running-shoes."

> Widmerpool, fairly heavily built, thick lips and metal-rimmed spectacles giving his face as usual an aggrieved expression, first took coherent form in my mind. As the damp, insistent cold struck up from the road, two thin jets of steam drifted out of his nostrils, by nature much distended, and all at once he seemed to possess a painful solidarity that talk about him had never conveyed.

Thus "stiffly, almost majestically, Widmerpool moved on his heels out of the mist."

Dance concluded in 1974 with *Hearing Secret Harmonies*, with Jenkins living, as Powell has for decades, in the country, observing and commenting with his usual wit and dispassion on the social, political and sexual turbulences of England in the early 1970s. Previous novels in the sequence have taken Nick through the years between the wars as he works in publishing, then screenwriting, publishes a couple of novels, gets married, lives in London. He serves as an officer in the army during World War II and afterwards participates in the London literary scene. Meanwhile all about him characters appear, disappear, then—like Widmerpool—once more rise up out of the mist, usually causing a surprise when they do.

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The presiding metaphor of a dance is set forth in two opening paragraphs to the whole sequence, as an anonymous narrator encounters some road repair work in which a number of workmen, taking a break, are gathered round a bucket of coke burning in front of their shelter. Snow begins to fall; the workmen go back to work; the day draws in. Gradually the narrator begins to emerge, being reminded first of the ancient world ("Legionaries in sheepskin warming themselves at a brazier") then of Poussin's painting, "in which the Seasons, hand in hand and facing outward, tread in rhythm to the notes of the lyre that the winged and naked greybeard plays." There follows an often-quoted piece of writing in Powell's high style that gives eloquent expression to the project on which he and we are about to embark:

> The image of Time brought thoughts of mortality: of human beings, facing outward like the Seasons, moving hand in hand in intricate measure: stepping slowly, methodically, sometimes a trifle awkwardly, in evolutions that take recognizable shape: or breaking into seeming meaningless gyrations, while partners disappear only to reappear again, once more giving pattern to the spectacle: unable to control the melody, unable, perhaps, to control the steps of the dance.

At which point "classical associations" remind Nick of his days at school and the narrative proper launches itself.

Twenty years after the dance was brought to its close, it should be possible to arrive at an estimate of Powell's literary contribution. To some extent, he is a cult figure, admired by an informed and devoted group of Anglo-American readers able at a moment's challenge to distinguish a character named Bithel from one named Borrit. But that cult status makes it harder to decide how much Powell counts. To be the sort of writer whose work invites guidebooks in which characters, plots, births, deaths and marriages may be charted at length is to risk accusations of triviality—just the thing that Anglophiles get carried away with.

The reader who doesn't get on with *Dance* is put off by the worry or the certainty that it's all gossip, and gossip about a particular social stratum at the end of its tether: the English upper-class, public school, privileged network of old boys and the girls they do or don't marry, 1920-1970. For those who don't get on with Powell, Marvin Mudrick will have said the last word, when he mocked the sequence as "the most interminable soap-opera since Australopithecus." "Powell's method of getting on with the story must be the most ponderously inefficient of all time," Mudrick began, noting that when a character is introduced, the narrator, Jenkins, spends a few pages speculating on the probable nature of this figure who, it may be, "is blond, has small ears, and wears a black raincoat." Later on, as the character turns up more than once, Jenkins will proceed, says Mudrick, to add further uninteresting though precise details to the portrait. Mudrick called this procedure less a narrative method than "a spreading tumor of speculation," and said that Powell suffered from "an elephantiasis of the will, making harrumphing preparations for something that never happens."

There is no point in "arguing" with such a colorful onslaught, but there is point in noting that, by never descending to quoting anything from the novel, Mudrick assumes (or assures us) that no one could be interested in listening to the narrator's speculating voice as it slyly presents and protracts character in action. But if slyness is attributable to Powell the novelist, it does not describe the blend of modestly thoughtful and intimate speculation that characterizes Nick Jenkins's voice. Nick is perhaps the least aggressive, least willful, most reasonable narrator ever to show up in a novel. It is his virtue, or limitation, as some might feel it, to avoid self-dramatizing theatrics, to make reticence about private matters a mark of character. When, in an especially charged moment, he lays eyes for the first time upon Isobel Tolland, one of a large number of brothers and sisters in an aristocratic family, he addresses us with a question: "Would it be too explicit, too exaggerated, to say that when I set eyes on Isobel Tolland, I knew at once that I should marry her?" Never did a question less invite the negative answer, and we hear virtually no more about Isobel at this or subsequent moments. She marries Nick, has children by him, shares a joke or a quiet exchange with him now and then, but that's all.

Although it would be misleading to call Nick reticent in his dealings with and reflections on other characters, those reflections always feel tentative, capable of revision. The more offensive and egregious are the words or behavior of someone like Widmerpool with whom Nick has to deal, the more he will bend over backwards to insist that there's perhaps something to what Widmerpool is saying. Nick is very good at seeing what there is to be said in defense of even the most indefensible; he provides us with the kind of detached consideration of the foibles of others which, in life, we are scarcely able to manage. Much of the time, since this is a work of comedy, his perspective on things is open, watchful and, if not amused, at least interested in what's going on.

Consider a moment from *A Question of Upbringing*, in which a practical joke misfires. Nick is visiting his roommate Peter Templer, at whose father's house the guests include a disagreeable man named Jimmy Stripling, married to Templer's older sister Babs, and a rather more attractive one named A. Sunderland ("Sunny") Farebrother. One evening Farebrother attempts to demonstrate a handy gadget for turning white shirt collars, thus saving money. Stripling offers one of his collars for demonstration, and eventually the contraption manages to tear, dirty or ruin several of them. In revenge, Stripling plans a trick on the night before Farebrother's departure. A load of baggage outside the latter's door—suitcases, fishing rod and landing net, a gun case—includes a leather hat-box containing the bowler hat required for Sunny's business in the City. As Nick and Templer's sister watch, Stripling appears, approaching Farebrother's closed door, carrying a small green chamber pot in his hand, the plan being to substitute it for the hat.

> My immediate thought was that relative size might prevent this plan from being put successfully into execution; though I had not examined the inside of the hat-box, obviously itself larger than normal (no doubt built to house more commodious hats of an earlier generation), the cardboard interior of which might have been removed to make room for odds and ends. Such economy of space would not have been out of keeping with the character of its owner. In any case it was a point upon which Stripling had evidently satisfied himself, because the slight smile on his face indicated that he was absolutely certain of his ground. No doubt to make an even more entertaining spectacle of what he was about to do, he shifted the china receptacle from the handle by which he was carrying it, placing it between his two hands, holding it in front of him, as if it were a sacrificial urn. Seeing it in this position, I changed my mind about its volume, deciding that it could indeed be contained in the hat-box. However, before this question of size and shape could be settled one way or the other, something happened that materially altered the course that events seemed to be taking; because Farebrother's door suddenly swung open, and Farebrother himself appeared, still wearing his stiff shirt and evening trousers, but without a collar. It occurred to me that perhaps he knew of some mysterious process by which butterfly collars, too, could be revived, as well as those of an up-and-down sort, and

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that he was already engaged in metamorphosing the evening collar he had worn at the Horabins'.

There the long paragraph ends, a new one beginning with this short sentence: "Stripling was taken completely by surprise." Farebrother remains silent, only raising his eyebrows a little; whereas Stripling's features, as he strides on down the hall, "looked not so much angry, or thwarted, as in actual physical pain." "With an air of being hurt, or worried," Farebrother quietly shuts his door; the narrator, feeling uncommonly tired, also retires. And that is that. Mudrick might call it a perfect example of harrumphing aimlessly, as Nick's cautious, even pedantic deliberations unfold: he hadn't examined the inside of the hatbox, isn't sure the chamber pot will fit—though perhaps this box, built for "more commodious" hats, and with its cardboard removed, may do the trick. Yes, he decides as Stripling holds it up urn-like in front of him, the chamber pot will fit.

In one sense all this fussing has nothing to do with the fact that Farebrother opens the door and catches Stripling in the act of behaving, as he thinks, very oddly. In a more important sense, however, the fussing, the qualification and requalification, the leisurely focus, is the whole point of such comic writing. Powell has read Proust and knows that his readers most likely will have done so as well. Are there not satisfactions in writing post-Proust about chamber pots and hat-boxes as if they constituted the stuff of imaginative recapture? Although Powell's humorous writing is often compared with Evelyn Waugh's, it has more affinities with early Samuel Beckett, especially the Beckett of *Murphy* who, at the beginning of his literary career, wrote a monograph on Proust. Beckett's comedy is denser, louder, more slapstick, but it unfolds, like Powell's, through the narrator's mock-pedantic treatment of his subject. If one doesn't take the trouble to listen to Beckett's or Powell's sentences as the voice unrolls them, the writing will provoke active annoyance.

Assuming, though, that you are pleased rather than provoked by the hatbox incident, you may become curious to hear more about the potential victim turned conqueror, Sunny Farebrother. We come immediately to the second great pleasure of *Dance* (second only to its narrative voice): the disappearance and reappearance of characters who, facing outward like Poussin's Seasons, are "moving hand in hand in intricate measure." The following morning Nick finds himself on the same train to London with Farebrother who, in puzzlement, tells Nick about Stripling's strange behavior—"marching down the passage holding *a jerry* in front of him as if he were taking part in some ceremony." What could he have been doing, and was it a joke? Nick plays the innocent. Sunny finally decides that it wasn't a joke, since "we are always hearing that his health is not good." In other words, Stripling's involvement with the "jerry" might be accounted for by serious intestinal problems. At any rate, Farebrother concludes with a vague and pleasantly irrelevant reflection about Stripling: "Coupled with the rest of his way of going on ... it made a bad impression." Farebrother's futile attempt to make sense of Stripling's behavior stands on its own with minimum narrative comment, Powell taking care not to spoil the comedy by explicit underlining. Abruptly the section ends:

> We passed on towards London. When we parted company Sunny Farebrother gave me one of his very open smiles, and said: "You must come and lunch with me one of these days. No good my offering you a lift as I'm heading Citywards." He piled his luggage, bit by bit, on to a taxi; and passed out of my life for some twenty years.

From time to time, in the novels that follow, Farebrother is briefly thought of, in connection with Stripling's attempted joke. In *The Soldier's Art* (book eight), he reappears in person, skirmishing with Widmerpool, both of them now officers in the army. Finally, in *Hearing Secret Harmonies* Nick recalls meeting Farebrother, now nearly 80, in the tube, coming back from Kensal Green cemetery, where Farebrother has attended the funeral of none other than Jimmy Stripling. He makes a point of going to funerals, Farebrother confides, "because you always meet a lot of people at them you haven't seen for years, and that often comes in useful later." Stripling's, however, was the exception to this rule, the turnout embarrassingly small, the assembly a poor lot. Preparing to depart the train, Nick asks after Sunny's health and Sunny replies, "Top-hole form, top-hole. Saw my vet last week. Said he's never inspected a fitter man of my age." A widower now, he invites Nick and his wife to come and see his roses:

> As I walked along the platform towards the Exit staircase the train moved on past me. I saw Farebrother once more through the window as the pace increased. He was still sitting bolt upright, and had begun to smile again. On the visit to which he had himself referred, the time when Stripling's practical joke had fallen so flat, Peter Templer had

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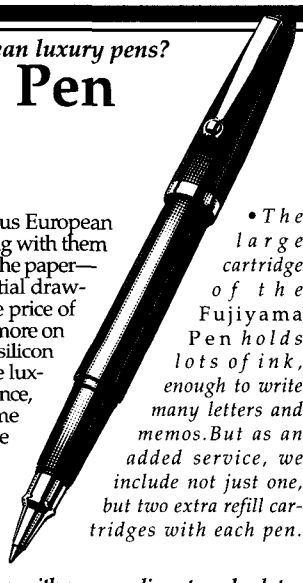

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pronounced a judgment on Farebrother. It remained a valid one.

"He's a downy old bird."

Whatever, exactly, a downy old bird might look like, we have undeniably met him in the person of Sunny Farebrother.

Farebrother's quirky memorableness, like so many other figures that populate the pages of *Dance*, is grounds for reflection on the novelist's technique of characterization, especially since, as the individual books appeared, reviewers fell into the habit of classifying characters either as representing the Will or the Imagination. Men of the Will are power-hungry, like Widmerpool, or the critic, J.G. Quiggin, or the industrialist, Sir Magnus Donners; men of Imagination like Stringham, or Nick's composer friend Hugh Moreland, or Nick himself, care about poetry, art and music, and are sometimes careless of their own best interests, at least in the eyes of others.

This distinction between will and imagination is harmless and true enough, but it doesn't go far toward reminding us that, as his treatment of Farebrother may suggest, Powell's art is importantly an art of the surface, insofar as it asks us to be interested in what the character *is* rather than what he or she represents. After all, Poussin's Seasons are facing outward, not inward. Powell, who admired the Wyndham Lewis who wrote *Tarr* and *The Wild Body* stories, has his own predilection for "external" art, a predilection to be noted especially in his brilliant prewar novels, *Afternoon Men* (1931) and *From a View to a Death* (1933). But the external treatment is to be found in *Dance* as well. The essential things about Farebrother are his smile, his roses, his expressions ("jerry," "top-hole," the doctor as a "vet"), and of course his name itself.

In calling *Dance* the most interminable soap-opera since Australopithecus, Mudrick must have thought he'd scored a good hit. What more damning to art than a comparison to trash? But Powell's art is not necessarily undone by the comparison. As with daily episodes in a soap opera, you could skip parts of any particular novel from *Dance* and still be able to locate yourself well enough in its successor. For although both *Dance* and the soap have plenty of plots, they lack an overall Plot. A masterplot would imply a conclusion, when in fact the show aspires to run on forever. Powell has said that he conceived of *Dance* because he didn't think he was especially good at making up plots that would begin, develop and conclude themselves in 225 pages. To write a twelve-novel sequence is, time and again, to defer conclusion. *Dance* eventually concludes, but we don't read it with the excited sense that we're following an action that's working itself out.

It is also possible to develop affection for and interest in a character that depend upon acquaintance developed over the long haul. Experiencing the self-contained characters of *Dance*, with their amusing, often striking surfaces, their distinctive idioms and vocabularies, their styles of address, is a more complicated version of the way we get to know long-enduring characters in a soap. Of course the psychology of a soap character's "inner life" is laughable, sketched only in the crudest of fashions; but over the course of time spent watching a soap, we build up a pleased recognition as characters reappear, sometimes even come back from the dead, once more to do their thing. So it is with most, if not all, of the personages in *Dance*. But, unlike the effect of a soap, the illusion of Powell's art is to make us feel that the more we're acquainted with a character the more his ultimate inaccessibility to us and to the narrative understanding that presents him becomes apparent. T.S. Eliot once praised Ben Jonson's dramas as "poetry of the surface" that was in fact not superficial but solid. The surface of things in Powell's art is so rich, solid and bristling with interest that no one who really looks at it will want to look behind it.

For the reader who takes Powell seriously, there are of course innumerable other aspects and qualities of the work with which to be concerned: the rendering of period details from the '20s to the '70s; the pervasive mythological, historical and occult lore that deeply fascinates some of the characters, and in a playful way Powell himself; the unusual pungent sexual slang ("I only stuffed her once," says Bob Duport of the notorious Pamela Flitton, "Against a shed in the back parts of Cairo airport, but even then I could see she might drive you round the bend.")

Rather than exploring such matters, I want—by considering two examples of it—to touch on an enduring pleasure of *Dance* not enough remarked on by critics of Powell's work. This pleasure comes from the densely allusive way in which poems, hymns and popular songs pervade the sequence. (The going word for it these days is "intertextuality," a term that would doubtless afford Powell some amusement.) Such allusiveness deepens the mystery of human character and action, rather than accounting for or explaining it. An appealing instance is found in the character of Ted Jeavons, second husband of the Lady Molly whose name gives the fourth novel its title. Jeavons was wounded in the stomach in the First World War and has suffered ever since ("I feel bilious most of the time"). Given to long silences, he has no visible employment, but he is interested in various gadgets, and attempts without success to interest others in them.

Every so often Jeavons needs to kick up the traces and go out on his own for a night of serious drinking (incapacitating himself for days thereafter), perhaps flirt with a "tart" or two. His finest moment comes at the end of *The Kindly Ones*, just halfway through *Dance*, at the point where England has gone to war with Germany and Nick is trying to get commissioned in the army. At the end of a small party, Nick is sitting with Ted and his brother Stanley in the Jeavons' South Kensington flat, the room blacked out for German air raids. Ted Jeavons is wandering about in his mackintosh and pajamas, and Stanley, who "evidently found his brother's life inexplicable," has given Nick a useful lead on getting into an infantry regiment. Whereupon Ted Jeavons

> moved towards the table where the beer bottles stood. Suddenly he began to sing in that full, deep, unexpectedly attractive voice, so different from the croaking tones in which he ordinarily conversed:
>
> "There's a long, long trail a-winding
> Into the land of ... my dreams,
> Where the night ... ingale is singing
> And the white moon beams.
> There's a long, long night of waiting,
> Until my dreams all ... come true ... "
>
> He broke off as suddenly as he had begun. Stanley Jeavons began tapping out his pipe again, perhaps to put a stop to this refrain. "Used to sing that while we were blanco-ing," said Jeavons. "God, how fed up I got cleaning that bloody equipment."

At which point Nick says good night and makes his way home. Abrupt, inexplicable, unexpectedly attractive, mysterious in its point of ending as well as its motive for beginning, the moment makes Ted Jeavons stranger as well as more familiar to us.

As always at memorable moments in *Dance*, the pleasure lies in the complex mixture of feeling, the narrative "tone" that constitutes Powell's unique blend of things and makes for allusive satisfactions. This satisfaction is produced most memorably in the six-and-a-half pages from *The Military Philosophers* (book nine) when Nick attends the service of General Thanksgiving in St. Paul's to commemorate the end of World War II. In these pages we give ourselves over to

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the meanderings of an intricate if reticent sensibility as it responds to lines and passages from the Bible and from English poetry, while itself becoming densely poetic in its associations. After the Royal Party is seated there are prayers, then a hymn: "Angels in the height, adore him;/ Ye behold him face to face;/ Saints triumphant, bow before him/ Gather'd in from every race." Nick reflects that, whether saints or no, under the great dome are gathered together, in the various Allied representatives, every race. He remembers how Stringham, dead in a Japanese POW camp in Singapore, used to quote hymns because they "described people and places so well." Thoughts of Stringham bring to mind others dead or probably dead in the war, like his old roommate Peter Templer and his cousin George Tolland.

The minister begins to read from the book of Isaiah about how, in the new dispensation, "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose." Mention of "the wayfaring men" who "though fools, shall not err within," makes Nick wonder who these "fools" are: one would surely be the drunken, endearing Bithel (whom Widmerpool had sacked from the Mobile Laundry). But what about the perennially unsatisfied Borrit, another of Nick's wartime companions? Borrit once told of marveling at how, traveling in Spain on business, he noticed honeymoon couples being shown to their bedrooms, then not being visible for a fortnight ("They've got their own ways, the Spaniards"). We remember that Borrit was sexually disappointed; that, as he put it once, he "never had a free poke in his life. Subject doesn't seem to arise when you're talking to a respectable woman." Now Borrit, too, is dead, and Nick wonders whether he ever got that "free poke" before the grave claimed him.

More prayers, a psalm, a dull bit of preaching by the Archbishop, then all rise to sing Blake's "Jerusalem": "Bring me my bow of burning gold;/Bring me my arrows of desire;/Bring me my spear;/O Clouds unfold!/ Bring me my chariot of fire!" Was that also about sex, Nick wonders, and if so why were they singing it at the victory service? Further reflections on changes in poetic fashions and on Blake's phrase "arrows of desire" makes Nick think of Cowley, once a famous poet who didn't survive his own age but who (unlike Blake) is buried in Westminster Abbey. Nick recalls Pope's question about the man ("Who now reads Cowley?") and his "Pindarique art." Yet, remembering some witty lines from Cowley about lust ("Thou with strange adultery/Doest in each breast a vigil keep;/Awake, all men do lust for thee,/And some enjoy thee when they sleep"), Nick decides that the poet who wrote them shouldn't be forgotten. He compares them favorably with lines from "poor old Edgar Allen Poe" on a similar theme, Poe having recourse to "ethereal dances" and "ethereal streams." Yet it was the lines from Poe, Nick reflects, that used to run in his head when many years previously he was in love with Jean Duport.

The congregation stands to sing "Now thank we all our God"—was this hymn of German origin chosen by design or inadvertence? Finally comes the National Anthem, and Nick decides that its second verse ("O Lord our God arise/ Scatter his enemies,/ And make them fall./ Confound their politics/ Frustrate their knavish tricks"), is the best part, since "the verbiage of high thinking had not yet cloaked such petitions." But then and finally, in one of those gestures that permeate *Dance*, where a formulation is slightly taken back, criticized and qualified, Nick questions his own verbiage:

> Such a mental picture of the past was no doubt largely unhistorical, indeed totally illusory, freedom from one sort of humbug merely implying, with human beings of any epoch, thraldom to another. The past, just as the present, had to be accepted for what it thought and what it was.

So ends the service and Nick's accompanying monologue, whose concluding sentence is a fine and moving example of the cast of Powell's mind. Nick and his creator resist the temptation to take a nostalgic view of history. They believe that back there somewhere people and songs said what they meant, without "the verbiage of high thinking." Such a view of the past is rejected in favor of what appears to be a theoretical idea that goes deeper into things, that explains and accounts for them. But it is an idea, a formula that doesn't quite formulate, since it leaves us with both past and present "to be accepted for what it thought and what it was." The surface of things, of history and character, is too much itself to be got behind, to be replaced by something less real than the way words and things look and feel and say. Like Henry James's mind according to Eliot, the narrative poise of *Dance* is so fine that no idea can violate it. So the only thing to do is reread, something any lover of Powell will do abundantly.

At the service in St. Paul's, Nick calls Blake "a genius, though not one for the classical taste. He was too cranky." Compared to Powell, the other two central writers of English comedy in recent decades, Evelyn Waugh and Kingsley Amis, seem, for all their talent, cranky rejecters and mockers of modern civilization. In his registration of different people, different historical periods—including the present one—Powell by contrast offers something that might be called classical. Or call it neoclassical, as summed up in Pope's fine couplet: "Let the strict life of graver mortals be/ A long, exact, and serious comedy."

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Deficit, schmeficit

I'M RUNNING ON THE BEACH NEAR Santa Monica during the reporting break I like to take around four o'clock, when East Coast sources have left their offices for the day. And I'm thinking: if you're one of those oddballs who likes to write about Social Security reform for a living, this isn't a bad way to do it. At this hour, the midday blaze gives way to a heart-stopping pre-sunset hue from the west. The silhouette of the Santa Monica mountains rises above the ocean, where reflected sunlight dances to the horizon. When we came out here from Washington for my wife's new job, I felt like a deficit hawk in exile, anxious about being away from "the action," worried that I'd degenerate into some kind of budget guy to the stars. Now John Kasich seems far away. I run on a narrow, freshly paved bike path that goes for miles down the center of the beach, proof that government can still improve the quality of life, especially for rollerbladers. The waves crawl up the sand. A cool sea breeze blows. A shirtless, earringed man on a skateboard whizzes by, pulled, Eskimo-style, by two dogs. Deficit, schmeficit.

THAT WE MOVED HERE FOR MY wife's job seems to have enhanced my status in the eyes of every woman who hears it. Our theory was simple: like health insurance, a writer ought to be portable. But the idea that we might put Jody's career before mine—people itching to write on national politics apparently aren't flocking to L.A.—qualifies me, to judge from the response, as a New Man of the '90s. The truth is I felt a westward tug myself. In a prior life as a management consultant, I'd spent three months here and fell in love. After a stint in government, the idea of a break from Washington was appealing. And if Michael Kinsley was leaving town, I thought, it must be the smart thing to do. Still, when my wife suddenly panicked on moving day, saying through tears that she couldn't leave family and roots back east, it did spoil the image of self-sacrifice I'd been nurturing. When you find yourself dragging your wife across the country for the sake of *her* dream job and with fears for your own, "selfless" mutates to "self-pity" in a flash. Luckily, it was just a phase. In fact, between Jody's personal trainer, at-home masseur and flirtations with a nutritionist, it turns out I married a woman predestined for la-la land. This could be trouble.

SETTLING IN L.A. IS AN ADVENture. When real estate brokers hear you're a "writer," they light up, assuming your bankbook looks like Oliver Stone's. When I went to the motor vehicles bureau to get my license, there was Jack Lemmon renewing his, though he needed the full three tries to pass his written exam. Then Anthony Hopkins showed up at the little place we go for breakfast on Sundays. It's fun. Meanwhile, L.A.'s classic conundrums now perplex me as well: Why, at every stoplight, is there a pretty blonde in a black Mercedes convertible driven by a balding man talking on a car phone? What really goes on at the "Self-Realization Fellowship" down the street? And what made the owner of the "Stress Retreat/PMS Relief Center" think business would boom in the strip center next to the Japanese restaurant?

THERE'S AN INTERESTING WRINKLE to politics out here. As Marge Tabankin, another Beltway refugee who ran the Hollywood Women's Political Caucus, explains, the stars typically don't gripe about higher taxes, making them among the small handful of wealthy citizens who don't view Clinton's term entirely though that prism. "Limousine liberal" doesn't explain this sufficiently. My theory is that these supertalents are more sensitive than the average plutocrat to the portion of their wealth that's attributable to a divine gift. Yes, there's hard work and persistence and making your own luck, but the voice, the presence, the body (well, scratch that) come from God. The idea that beneficiaries of such income-enhancing blessings might be asked to bear more of the burden of government seems fair to them, not cause for resentment. Even though similar accidents of birth account for the lofty incomes of, say, corporate lawyers, they're much more likely to credit their toil, presumably because what they do all day is unpleasant. If I'm right, maybe the platonic ideal for tax reform would combine a flat tax on income that's due to one's own efforts and character, with sharply higher rates on cash derived from an excess of gifts from God. Chew on that, Steve Forbes.

OUR RENTED CORNER OF PARADISE has its creepy parts, like every modern city. Yes, in Pacific Palisades—home once to Ronald Reagan, and now to Arnold and Maria's compound—the banks are open Saturday, the supermarket has a deli that rivals New York's, and on July 4 the whole town comes out for a storybook parade featuring hometown boys sky-diving and honorary mayor Eddie Albert beaming from a '57 Thunderbird. Dozens of private security company squad cars patrol the streets, with nary an L.A.P.D. black and white to be seen. You can sit all day on the village green and not see anyone—anyone—who's black. Though I like to boast now of my fresh "beyond the Beltway" perspective, it's no secret that this isn't the real world. It's not even the real L.A.

AS IT HAPPENS, NO ONE in Washington noticed I left. Including my new boss. "You live in L.A.?" Michael Kelly, the incoming editor of TNR wrote the other day. "I am confused." I make a couple of trips to D.C. a month and get similar reactions. It's hard to know if this means my pieces still read like a Beltway bandit's, or if I'm generally invisible. This insecurity haunts the L.A. political writer. In Washington, you always see people who liked, or at least saw, your piece on x or y. Out here, needless to say, there aren't as many people per square mile who care why Bob Dole's charity tax credit isn't sensible. As someone relatively new to the writing life, this lack of attention is scary, sort of like the way our new puppy must feel when we leave him alone in a room. It turns out the cure for both the puppy and me is the same. As the wife of a well-known writer advised my wife, "You have to give them lots of praise and recognition—they just don't get it here the same way." On the other hand, snobs back east who ask, "Who do you *talk* to?" are missing something big. Yes, Truman Capote said you lose two points of IQ for every year you live in L.A. But tell that to James Q. Wilson (at UCLA), or best-selling author Richard Reeves (down the street), or the gang at RAND (who are clearly brainier than the rest of us, putting a think tank smack on the beach). I could go on. But come to think of it, a few points of IQ for sunsets like these isn't a bad trade.

BY THE WAY, WE NAMED OUR PUPPY, a beagle, "Budge." You know, short for the "b" word. At twelve weeks, he's as messy and intractable as the real thing. And if he's good with kids, he'll be preoccupying us until the baby boom retires.

MATTHEW MILLER

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